



FIDEL CASTRO

DENOUNCES

BUREAUCRACY AND

SECTARIANISM

SPEECH OF MARCH 26 1962

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Moderator — Good evening, ladies and gentlemen of the television audience. All the radio and television stations of Cuba have been linked tonight in order to give the public the opportunity of listening to the First Secretary of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations [ORI] and Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government, Dr. Fidel Castro, who will be questioned by a panel of newspapermen composed of the *compañeros* Raul Valdes Vivo, of the newspaper *Hoy*, of Ithiel Leon, of the newspaper *Revolucion*, and Ernesto Vera, of the newspaper, *La Tardé*.

Dr. Castro proposes to deal with certain matters related to the operating methods of the ORI, the revolutionary organization of which he is First Secretary.

The first question will be asked by *compañero* Valdes Vivo.

Raul Valdes Vivo — *compañero* Fidel Castro, recently our people have listened with renewed enthusiasm to you and to other *compañeros* of the National Directorate of the ORI insist before the masses on the necessity of improving all the work of the revolution, of combatting errors and defects, sectarianism and conformity with a great spirit of criticism and of self-criticism. In regard to this, our people are awaiting your report tonight relating to the recent accords of the ORI National Directorate for the end of perfecting its organizational apparatus, purifying and strengthening the active revolutionary nuclei, and improving the methods and the form of work.

What can you tell us in regard to these matters, *compañero* Fidel Castro?

Dr. Fidel Castro — Well, I have many things to say in regard to these matters.

To begin with, I would like to refer to a saying of Lenin, that the attitude, that is to say, the seriousness of purpose of a revolutionary party is measured, basically, by the attitude it takes towards its own errors. And in the same way, our seriousness of purpose as revolutionists and as members of the government will be measured by the attitudes we take towards our own errors.

Of course, our enemies are always alert to know what those errors are. When those errors are made and are not subjected to self-criticism, our enemies take advantage of them. When those errors are made and are subjected to self-criticism, they may be used by the enemy, but in a very different way, because in the former case our errors would not be corrected and in the latter they would be. That is why we have decided to take a forthright and serious attitude towards our own errors.

In this regard, the group of revolutionary *compañeros* who had been serving as members of the Directorate of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations have been conducting a wide-ranging discussion. We have been making a serious analysis, an honest analysis, a deep analysis of this whole process, from the First of January [1959] up to the present. We have been analyzing all that has been done, the good things that have been done and also the errors that have been made.

Accordingly, we have submitted to a process of analysis this whole stage of the formation of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations. This is not a simple problem. This is not an unimportant problem because, simply, it has to do with the political power of the revolution; it has to do with the methods of the revolution; it has to do with the ideology of the revolution.

The revolution — everyone is aware of the characteristics of its whole development, of its origin, of the historic moment in which this victorious revolution takes place; of all the circumstances characterizing the process, of the forces which participated, of the different tendencies which struggled to make their point of view prevail within the revolutionary process. In short, all of this is common knowledge.

It was logical that the revolution in this crucible — because the revolutionary process is a true crucible of forces, of energies — should try to organize, to build the revolutionary apparatus. It was not possible to conceive of a revolution without there arising out of that revolution — as is logical — a revolutionary apparatus charged with carrying the revolution forward, with perpetuating the revolution and projecting the revolution toward the future, that is, with preparing long-range plans for the revolution.

It was logical that the revolution should concern itself with the problem of organizing its political apparatus, its revolutionary apparatus. And there began that whole process which we have explained here on more than one occasion, through which the different forces which had participated in the process, which represented mass forces, forces of ideas, forces of public opinion, began to be integrated; and which, besides, represented experience, represented a wealth of values which the revolution had to integrate into that organization.

As a result of that process — at the same time that the non-revolutionary tendencies, the reactionary tendencies, the rightist tendencies, the conservative tendencies, the pro-imperialist tendencies, were being opposed — all the forces and all the revolutionary tendencies began to come together and to unite. They began to come together more and more, and to unite more and more.

For a long time this was a process having a spontaneous nature, that is to say, it was not the result of a preconceived plan, it was not a planned process. It was a process of a spontaneous nature, which the very struggle — because of the antagonisms which a revolutionary struggle, a true revolutionary struggle, originates — began to place on one side all those who did not respond to an idea, to a way of thinking, to a true revolutionary attitude, and on the other, all those who did respond to an attitude, to an idea, to a way of thinking, which was truly revolutionary.

Very well then, everyone knows that this process, which has lasted for three years, has been filled with events, with incidents, with struggles. It has not been a normal change; it has not been a quiet development; it was, rather, like every revolution and, more particularly, a revolution which is developing under the conditions of the present Cuban revolution, under conditions *sui generis*, under difficult conditions. It was logical then to expect that it would have to face a series of problems, a series of difficulties. These problems the revolution has been overcoming.

Well now, has that whole process of the integration of the revolutionary forces — have all the steps which have been taken in these matters, have they all been free of errors? No, they have not been free of errors. Could these errors have been avoided? It cannot be determined precisely up to what point these errors could have been avoided. My personal opinion is that those errors could not have been avoided.

Certain problems, certain vices, certain attitudes, were, if not impossible — and I think that they were impossible — at least very difficult

to avoid. Why? Because a revolution is a very complicated process, because in a revolution a great variety of factors, a variety of ways of thinking and a variety of methods, ideas, men who are very different from each other, an infinite number of circumstances, which little by little condition the process, intervene; because the process is the outcome of reality, the process is not the outcome, of an ideal existing in the minds of men, the process is the outcome of a living reality, of a specific economic, social and political reality.

And, therefore, a series of circumstances condition that process. We could not avoid a number of the early problems of the revolution. They were problems which were determined by a succession of desertions, by a succession of betrayals, by a variety of attitudes which began to manifest themselves when the revolution had barely taken its first forward steps. In addition, from the very start, the revolution clashed with a variety of ambitions, with the interests of the ruling classes, with the interests of the dominant economic classes which regarded the revolution with fear, which saw the revolution as a threat. The revolution clashed with the ideology of that class. It clashed with the thinking, with the people of that class, with the attitudes of that class, with the interests of that class.

The revolution clashed with a variety of ideas that were established in our country, ideas which had been inculcated in our country by the forces of reaction, by the forces of imperialism; ideas which were spread by the enemies of progress. They were a whole series of false ideas, of conservative ideas, of counter-revolutionary ideas really, and which had the strength of habit, which had the strength given them by years of existence. In some cases they had the strength imparted to them by decades of existence—or even of centuries.

These ideas had the strength of superstition. They had the strength of a series of conventional lies. They had the strength of a series of slogans which are given to the people as unquestionable truths, a series of dogmas of an economic nature, of a political nature, of a social nature, which had been inculcated for decades by the mass media, in books, in the universities, in the secondary schools, by the political parties which were beholden to the ruling classes.

The new ideas of the revolution clashed with the strength of all those ideas. Wherein lay the strength of the ideas of the revolution? Was it in the publicity which had been given to these ideas? Was it in the political parties which could have been organized to spread these ideas? Were they in the existing newspapers, on the radio and television stations? No. The strength of these new ideas, that is, of the revolutionary ideas, dwelt in the economic and social reality of our country. These ideas represented truths, truths which had to confront reality, truths which had to confront the lies of the enemies of the exploited classes, truths which simply had to win acceptance.

Why did the truths of the revolution win acceptance? They won acceptance simply because these truths, these ideas, answered the great desires of the masses; they answered the needs of the masses. And that is why all the lies began to crumble, why all the lies of the bourgeoisie began to crumble, why the lies of the reactionaries, of the landlords, of the imperialists, began to crumble. All their conventionalism, all their lies were slowly defeated by the overwhelming advance of the revolutionary ideas which represented the interests of the exploited masses.

But that marked a period of struggle, a difficult period of struggle. The masses were slowly won over to the revolutionary ideas. In that struggle everyone took a position. Not everyone was won over to these revolutionary ideas. Some took a certain position toward the revolutionary ideas and others took other positions, that is, depending on the revolutionary ideas. This is a process which cannot be cut short. This is a process in which opinions and the different classes of the nation cannot be sliced neatly because it is a very complicated one. It would be necessary to analyze the reasons why some reacted in one way and some in another.

Behind it all were the interests of the classes. The *campesino*, the worker, the poor citizen, the poor family, reacted according to their class interests. The rich, the *latifundistas* [great landowners], the owners of big stores, the bankers, those who had been educated in the ideas of the imperialists, ideas which moreover responded to their own interests, reacted differently.

And there were some who held opinions which were not in accord with the interests of their class. There were people of the poor, humble classes, so confused by lies, by superstitions, that they reacted against their own class interests. There were people who, although they could not be considered as belonging to an exploited class, reacted, nevertheless, favorably towards the revolution. There were untold numbers of young people who were not yet politically well-grounded, but who possessed an excellent attitude, great qualities, a great spirit of rebellion, a great sense of justice, of equality, a great understanding of the new, a great readiness to accept revolutionary ideas who, however, had not developed sufficiently.

All these facts denoted a great struggle; they marked a struggle between ideas. Which ideas came out victorious? The revolutionary ideas were victorious; the ideas of the masses came out victorious; the new truths of the revolution came out victorious. All lies, all dogmatism, all falsehoods, all hypocrisy were defeated.

Does this mean that that struggle has ended? No, that struggle has not ended. The struggle assumes very different forms, very subtle forms at times. That is to say that in the first great battles between the new and the old ideas, the new ideas, the revolutionary ideas, have come out victorious over the old ideas.

Nevertheless, the struggle continues, and it will continue for a long time on a national scale, and it will continue on an international scale, and it will continue on a global scale. This same battle between ideas, this same struggle between ideologies which is going on in our country between socialism, between Marxism, between imperialism, between capitalism, between Marxist theory and bourgeois theory, the liberal theory, is going on outside of Cuba with each side using its arguments.

It is natural that when those who represent the revolutionary ideology, the Marxist ideology, make errors, that the enemy takes advantage of them; when those who represent the revolutionary truths make mistakes, when they make errors, when they have faults, the enemy takes advantage of them.

For example, if we, who are the defenders of socialism, the defenders of Marxism, as a result of the imperialist blockade, as a result of our harassment by world reaction, but in addition, as a consequence of our own errors, find ourselves facing certain shortages in food supplies, if we find, for example, that we have not had sufficient ability to produce certain articles

which we had the means of producing, the enemy takes advantage of this by saying: "That is socialism, socialism is a failure, but not capitalism, under capitalism there was no rationing, this didn't happen under capitalism."

Of course, then it would be necessary to make a deeper analysis in in order to explain that under capitalism some ate and some didn't; that under capitalism some worked and some didn't; and how in spite of aggressions - let us not take into consideration all the contributing factors related to the enemy's maneuvers against the revolution to starve it to death - in spite of these contributing factors, how socialism has meant more work for hundreds of thousands more of our people, how it has meant higher levels of income. And that if today there are people who complain that they now receive less than before, what could have been the situation of those who formerly received nothing?

The very ones who now complain that they receive such and such an amount are admitting that if they find it a bit difficult to satisfy their wants with those amounts - what then was the situation of thousands upon thousands who did not receive even that, who received absolutely nothing? What was the situation of the sugar-cane worker who was unemployed eight months of the year, who wore no shoes, who barely had clothes to wear, who ate inadequately, who was uneducated, who had no schools, who had no medicines, who had none of these things?

We are able, of course, to answer the arguments of our enemies and to prove our point. For without a doubt we are aided by truth and we are aided by reason itself; we are assisted by scientific concepts which are completely impervious to lies, to the campaigns conducted by our enemies. But it is an undeniable fact that the enemy takes advantage of our errors to try to sow confusion.

Naturally, we have made errors in the process of this struggle. Whence come these errors? From the very political, economic and social conditions which the struggle produces are also produced these errors.

Then the following occurred here: in the struggle against reactionary ideas, in the struggle against imperialism, against the deserters, against conservative tendencies, which was a struggle to the death, because the life of the revolution depended upon either the triumph of the ideas of imperialism or of the socialist ideas, of the Marxist ideas; in that struggle to the death, when all our efforts, all our energy, all our attention had to be dedicated to the struggle on that front, other types of errors were being committed - errors which the revolution would have to rectify in their turn, errors which the revolution would also have to combat at the proper time.

Well then, very definite symptoms are displayed by errors, as they are by anything self-destructive, as they are by anything harmful, as they are by any disease. Some are able to see that certain errors are being made. Nevertheless, one cannot begin to fight against errors until they have become manifest, until these errors begin to engender a body of opinion, that is to say, when men become conscious of them, when the very masses - not only the leaders, but the very masses - become conscious of these errors.

We are going to speak of errors here, of errors that were committed. Nevertheless, they were errors which in truth one could not begin to combat until they became evident to everyone, until all became aware of those errors and of the negative consequences of those errors.

One of the fundamental problems produced in the struggle against reactionary ideas, against conservative ideas, against the deserters, against those who wavered, against those with negative attitudes, was sectarianism.

It may be said that it was the fundamental error produced by that struggle of an ideological nature which was being waged.

That type of error was produced by the conditions in which the revolutionary process developed, and by the serious and fundamental struggle which revolutionary ideas had to wage against conservative elements and against reactionary ideas.

What tendency was manifesting itself? An opposite tendency began to manifest itself. The tendency to mistrust everybody, the tendency to mistrust everyone who could not claim a long record of revolutionary militancy, who had not been an old Marxist militant. It is logical and, after all, it is correct to say that in certain phases of this process, in certain phases of this struggle, when a serious struggle of ideas was underway, when there was confusion, when there were many who wavered, if a *compañero* was to be named to a post of high trust, if it was a post in which an especially important job was to be done, a post requiring persons who were firm in their ideas, that is to say, persons unaffected by doubt, who did not waver, it was a correct method in order to carry out many jobs to select a *compañero* about whom, because of his record of militancy, there existed not the least doubt regarding the steadfastness of his ideas, a *compañero* who entertained no doubts as to the course of the revolution.

When it was reported: "Such and such a charge d'affaires deserted, such and such a consul deserted, such and such an attaché deserted," it was inconceivable that the Republic could permit itself the luxury of naming people to posts who, because they were not politically firm and well-grounded, created scandals, embarrassed the revolution, and made it possible to believe that we had no reliable persons who could be named to these posts.

Well, that is correct. It cannot be denied that that is correct. It is true that given conditions produce given needs. But the revolution continued its forward march. The revolution became a powerful ideological movement. Revolutionary ideas slowly won the masses over. The Cuban people, in great numbers, began to accept revolutionary ideas, to uphold revolutionary ideas. That ardor, that rebelliousness, that sense of indignant protest against tyranny, against abuse, against injustice, was slowly converted into the firm revolutionary consciousness of our people.

Revolutionary ideas did not become the consciousness of a minority, of a group. They became the consciousness of the great masses of our people. Whoever doubts it, let him recall the Declaration of Havana, the Second Declaration of Havana, the presence there of a million Cubans; the enthusiasm with which those one million Cubans supported the revolutionary ideas, radical ideas, truly advanced ideas, contained in that Second Declaration of Havana; the enthusiasm with which they supported them, the evidence of political judgment they displayed as they hailed the value of each sentence.

What did this show? That the masses had become revolutionary; that the masses had embraced Marxist ideology; that the masses had embraced Marxism-Leninism. That was an unquestionable fact. The camps had been defined; the enemies had declared themselves as such; the laboring masses, the *campesino*, the student masses, the masses of the poor, the underprivileged masses of our nation, significant portions of the middle class, sections of the petty bourgeoisie, intellectual workers, made Marxist-Leninist ideas their own, made their own the struggle against imperialism, made their own the struggle for the Socialist Revolution.

That was not the product of a whim; that was not something which

was imposed upon the masses. The very revolutionary laws, the very accomplishments of the revolution, began to win the masses over to the revolution. They began to convert the masses into revolutionary masses. A whole series of accomplishments which began with a series of laws which benefited the people; all the laws benefited: the reduction in telephone rates, the cancellation of the corrupt contracts which the companies had obtained under the protection of the tyranny; the urban reform laws, the rent laws, beginning with the laws reducing rent and then the reduction of the price of building plots, then the urban reform law; then there were the agrarian reform laws, then the laws nationalizing foreign businesses and later the laws nationalizing large businesses. These became milestones marking the course of the revolution, marking the advance of the revolution, of the people.

The people developed rapidly — the people became more revolutionary by the day. When the danger of invasion began to threaten our country, when it was thought even possible that an attack would be made by the powerful forces of imperialism; when we became aware of that danger — because we will have to consider the possibility of such an attack for a long time to come — the people were mobilized, they became members of the militia. Thousands upon thousands of young men became anti-aircraft artillerymen, thousands upon thousands of workers, of poor people, became anti-tank gunners and artillerymen of various types, hundreds and thousands of men and women enrolled in the battalions, they enrolled in the combat units and they prepared to fight, if necessary, one of the greatest battles, one of the most heroic which any people could engage in.

This means that our people were prepared to take all the risks, to suffer all the consequences of their revolutionary stand, to oppose imperialism resolutely, without wavering. They were all willing to die, if necessary, in defense of the revolution and in defense of the homeland. Who will deny the enthusiasm with which the masses carried out many tasks, such as volunteering for work? They responded to every call that was made to them, to every mass meeting, to every patriotic gathering, to every revolutionary gathering.

So that when the cowardly attack of April 17 or of April 15 came, when airplanes, which came from foreign bases, attacked various places in our country; when we went to bury those *compañeros* who had died that day, as we had gone before to bury other *compañeros*, as we had done a few months before to bury the victims of the steamer *La Coubre*, other victims of reaction, of imperialism, of the reactionaries, of the exploiters; on the eve of the battle with the imperialists — for it was not done after the battle — the socialist character of the revolution was announced; we proclaimed what was already a fact.

And who can deny it? The overwhelming enthusiasm with which the masses of workers, assembled there and formed into militia battalions, raised their rifles and resolved to fight, resolved to give combat? Who can deny the heroism with which the soldiers, members of the militia, men and women, fought? Who can deny the heroism with which the people fought the mercenaries of Playa Girón? Who can deny the selflessness, the disregard for their lives, which the men showed when they threw themselves against tanks, against enemy machine guns, as they advanced steadily across open terrain, in the face of danger from enemy bombers, advancing steadily in the face of the enemy's air attacks, despite casualties and deaths caused in their ranks by the enemy's aircraft and the enemy's shells? Who can deny

this? A look at the number on the casualty list will suffice to make us understand the enthusiasm and selflessness with which the masses threw themselves into the fight. There they were, filled with enthusiasm, fighting consciously for the socialist revolution.

What does this mean? This means that a great qualitative change had taken place in the masses: they had become revolutionary masses. That is a positive fact, an undeniable fact. Whoever doesn't see it that way is near-sighted. Whoever doesn't see it that way is blind. Whoever doesn't see it that way is simply an idiot.

If then that was a truth which was self-evident, could we then apply methods which were applicable to other conditions? Could we convert that system, which the needs of the struggle in a specific phase of that struggle required, that is, those methods which the needs of the struggle demanded, could we convert that into a system? Could we turn that policy into a system? Could we turn those methods for the selection of *compañeros* for various administrative posts into a system? We could not turn those methods into a system!

It is unquestionable, and dialectics teaches us, that what in a given moment is a correct method, later on may be an incorrect one. That is what dialectics teaches us. Anything else is dogmatism, mechanism. It is a desire to apply measures which were determined by our special needs at a given moment to another situation in which the needs are different, in which other circumstances prevail. And we turned certain methods into a system and we fell into a frightful sectarianism.

What sectarianism? Well, the sectarianism of believing that the only revolutionists, that the only *compañeros* who could hold positions of trust, that the only ones who could hold a post on a people's farm, on a cooperative, in the government, anywhere, had to be old Marxist militants. We fell into that error partly unconsciously or at least it seemed that all those problems brought about by sectarianism were problems which were the product of unconscious forces, that they came about with a fatal inevitability, that it was a virus, that it was an evil which had become lodged in the minds of many people, and that it was difficult to combat. It was truly difficult to combat until that virus manifested itself as a disease.

There are those who suffer from the gripe, but it has been incubating inside of them for ten days and they become aware of it only when they are unable to speak. There are those who incubate a tetanus infection — I don't know if for 15 or 20 days, the doctors should know how long it takes — they carry it inside of them but they never receive a single injection until the moment the infection manifests itself, until the moment they are already suffering from the disease.

We often asked ourselves: What could be the reason? Where lies the reason for that implacable, untiring, systematic, sectarian spirit which is found everywhere, which is found on all levels, which is found wherever one goes? What are the causes, the roots of this sectarian spirit? For it was difficult to believe that that spirit sprang inevitably solely from a series of circumstances.

At times one could think: Well, this is the policy of a group; this is the policy of a party; there seem to be many who are responsible for this. Of course, we have all been responsible, in some degree or other. But when we begin to analyze this problem, when the old and new *compañeros* — we have to call them something in order to distinguish between them; let us call them old and new; let us use these names for them during this broadcast

and later we shall be able to find a name for all — but we were going to analyze all of this.

When that virus had already lodged in the minds of many, when that virus had already given rise to a veritable disease — because, naturally, sectarianism in and of itself is bad. It is bad for a list of reasons which we are going to enumerate later on. But above all it is bad because it creates conditions which make possible still greater evils. A disease may be bad, but it is worse if it occurs in conjunction with another disease. And so, when certain types of bodily ills are combined with others, they can cause the death of the organism. In the same way, certain political ills, when they occur together with other ills, may have very grave consequences for a revolution.

The revolution and the revolution alone was suffering from our errors and that is simply what was happening: a series of absurdities, of stupidities, of mistakes, were becoming apparent. This revolution was being side-tracked from its main trunk line and it was traveling along a spur line. It is as if the train from Havana to Oriente — because of a wrongly-set switch in Santa Clara or in Matanzas — goes off onto a side track and ends up in the Zapata Swamp. Traveling the line we were on, we were headed for the Zapata Swamp, because we had taken a completely wrong spur line.

We began to analyze. It became necessary to put these matters before the *compañeros* who were taking part, of the number of *compañeros* who were participating in the National Directorate, which was composed of a smaller number. We began the unrestricted analysis of these problems, of a series of manifestations, of a series of errors, of a series of irregularities which had been taking place. We wanted to make a deep analysis, a serious analysis; we wanted to discuss, to engage in self-criticism, in other words, we wanted to analyze and to engage in self-criticism.

The spirit with which all the *compañeros* of the Directorate — both the old and the new revolutionists — participated in the analysis of all these problems was truly useful. This is not a problem concerning only the new revolutionists, nor is it one concerning only the old. This whole discussion was undertaken with zeal by all. A thorough analysis of these problems, of this process from its beginnings on the First of January [1959] was undertaken. A study of an even earlier period was undertaken in order to find the root causes of certain problems. Consequently, we reached our conclusions unanimously, *compañeros*, unanimously, *compañeros*! For these viewpoints have been discussed and approved unanimously by the old and the new revolutionists.

What was being created here? What was going on here? Where was that extreme sectarian spirit leading? Where were certain irregularities, certain distortions, leading us? We were engaged in the task, among others, of organizing the political apparatus of the revolution: the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations, in other words, the ORI, the embryo, the structure of what is to become the United Party of the Socialist Revolution. We aired viewpoints, ideas, plans, and they met with the warmest enthusiasm, for there was no gathering, no mass meeting, where the plans for formation of the United Party of the Socialist Revolution were explained where they did not receive an ovation and the enthusiastic approval of the masses.

All right, then. We were all engaged in the task of organizing that party. Everyone here has been fulfilling an infinite number of obligations in one field or another. Everyone has been doing his utmost to prepare our resistance to the imperialist enemy, by fighting that enemy, by fighting on the cultural front, on every front. In short, we have been engaged in great

battles which have been consuming the enthusiasm — not consuming the enthusiasm, let us employ another term, because enthusiasm has not been "consumed" nor will it ever be "consumed." The enthusiastic attention of our *compañeros* in leading posts, of our militant *compañeros*, has been given to these tasks.

Others worked at tasks related to the formation of the party. And the party was taking shape, rather the ORI was taking shape, the ORI was being integrated. But, were we really forming a true Marxist party? Were we really constructing a true vanguard of the working class? Were we really integrating the revolutionary forces? We were not integrating the revolutionary forces. We were not organizing a party. We were organizing or creating or making a straitjacket, a yoke, *compañeros*. We were not furthering a free association of revolutionists, rather we were forming an army of tamed and submissive revolutionists.

Why? For a number of reasons. Sometimes a series of coincidences occur which make it possible for some *compañeros* to pervert the function of an organization, or to inflate its functions, to waste its best opportunities, to destroy them, to make use of them in the worst possible way. And that simply was what was happening.

Why do such things happen? I am going to give my opinion — I believe that I am expressing the opinion of many *compañeros* — because those of us who are fully identified with the revolution, those of us who consider the revolution a matter of life and death, basic to each of our lives, who have made the revolution a part of our life's blood, of our very being; those of us who love the revolution above all personal aspirations, all vanity, all personal ambition; those of us who love the revolution with the love which any man, any human being, feels for what he makes, for what he creates — the artist for his work of art, for his painting, for his statue; the father or mother for the child. Those of us who feel the revolution in that way, cannot imagine that others can see it in any other way. We cannot believe that this revolution which is so sacred to us, which has cost so much blood, which has cost so many lives, which has cost so much sacrifice and so much of our people's energy, could be used by anyone as a pretext or as a means to satisfy his vanity, to satisfy his ambitions, to satisfy aims which are not purely and strictly of a revolutionary nature.

Why mistrust any *compañero*? Why even imagine that any *compañero* could be capable of utilizing conditions which may permit him to achieve personal plans and aims, to convert this beautiful creation of the revolution, this beautiful creation of a whole people, this historic and heroic creation of the Cuban people, into a yoke, into a straitjacket, into a counter-revolutionary nightmare, into a brake on the revolution? How could we conceive such a thing?

That is how it was for many of us, for the majority, for practically all the *compañeros* of the revolution during this process of integration, or rather disintegration, of the Revolutionary Organizations.

Very well. When we became aware of what had happened, everything was a holy mess. Forgive my irreverence. I do not mean the men who were part of the ORI. Under no circumstances am I including the people who formed part of this organization. Men are very often the victims of the errors of others. Is it because the great majority of the people, who formed part of this organization, were no good? No, the great majority of the people who were in it were excellent revolutionists, loyal revolutionists, loyal to socialism, loyal to Marxism, loyal to the revolution. The problem did not

arise from that. The problem lay in the methods and in the goals, and in the goals which were serving as guides in the building of the apparatus.

The *companero* who was authorized — it is not known whether he was invested with the authority or whether he assumed it of his own accord, or whether it was because he had slowly begun to assume leadership on that front, and as a result found himself in charge of the task of organizing, or of working as the Secretary in Charge of Organization of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations. The one who enjoyed everyone's confidence, who acted with the prestige given him by the revolution, who, while speaking with the authority of the revolution because he spoke in its name and and in the name of the other *compañeros* of the revolution, the one who despite this fell, who regrettably, most regrettably, fell into the errors we have been enumerating, was the *companero* Aníbal Escalante.

This is not an easy task for anyone. It is not an easy matter for us to discuss and to explain all of these problems. Does it pain us? Of course it does. We cannot look upon Aníbal Escalante as we have upon other men who once were part of the revolution and then betrayed it.

Aníbal Escalante was a communist for many years. In our opinion he was a true communist, an honest communist. Has Aníbal Escalante become an anti-communist? A capitalist? No. A pro-imperialist? He has not become a pro-imperialist. Has he betrayed the revolution by going over to the enemy's camp? No, he has not betrayed the revolution by going over to the enemy's camp.

Aníbal Escalante has for a long time been our *companero* in carrying out tasks related to the direction of the revolution. More difficult still has it been for those who, being communists, worked closely with him not for one, not for two, not for three but for ten, twenty years; during years that were difficult ones for the communists, when the harassment was great, when they were heavily attacked, when the calumnies were many, when the campaigns, the efforts to isolate them, to surround them, to destroy them were great. Anyone can understand what I mean by seeing how communists are treated in the United States today. How their leaders are treated. The communist worker loses his job; he is persecuted; they try to starve him to death. Or they do to him what they did to Henry Winston who was locked up, mistreated, until, in a display of hypocritical kindness, he was released from jail — a blind man, physically destroyed. You all know how in the capitalist countries communists are treated with hate, with cruelty.

Aníbal Escalante passed through that whole period and saw his fondest dreams, what he had only seen as a hope, as an ideal of his worthy ideas, as an opportunity to transform our country from a semi-colonial country, oppressed by imperialism and capitalism, into a socialist country. He saw all this come true. Nevertheless, Aníbal Escalante erred. Aníbal Escalante, the communist, made grave mistakes. But this should not surprise us for the communists are human and they make errors! Is this perhaps the first time? No, the communists have erred many times. The history of the movement, of the very international communist movement, from the time that it sprang forth in the ideas and in the books, in the efforts and in the work of Marx and Engels, until the time that under Lenin it succeeded in establishing the first workers' government, it made great mistakes.

Many deserted Marxism; many attempted to revise Marxism; many made incorrect applications of Marxism. Leninism is necessarily forged in the struggle against the revisionists, against the pseudo-Marxists or mistaken Marxists.

Being a man like any other and, like any other human being, prone to error, *compañero* Aníbal Escalante made great mistakes.

We reached the conclusion, we were all convinced, that *compañero* Aníbal Escalante, abusing the faith placed in him, in his post as Secretary in Charge of Organization, followed a non-Marxist policy, followed a policy which departed from Leninist norms regarding the organization of a workers' vanguard party, and that he tried to organize an apparatus to pursue personal ends.

We believe that *compañero* Aníbal Escalante has had a lot to do with the conversion of sectarianism into a system, with the conversion of sectarianism into a virus, into a veritable sickness during this process.

Compañero Aníbal Escalante is the one responsible for having promoted the sectarian spirit to its highest possible level, of having promoted that sectarian spirit for personal reasons, with the purpose of establishing an organization which he controlled. He is the one responsible for introducing, in addition, a series of methods within that organization which were leading to the creation, not of a party – as we were saying – but rather of a tyranny, a straitjacket.

We believe that Aníbal Escalante's actions in these matters were not the product of oversight nor were they unconscious, but rather that they were deliberate and conscious. He simply allowed himself to be blinded by personal ambition. And as a result of this, he created a series of problems, in a word, he created veritable chaos in the nation.

Why? It's very simple. The idea of organizing the United Party of the Socialist Revolution, the idea of organizing a vanguard, a vanguard party, a workers' party, meets with the greatest acceptance among the masses. Marxism has the full support of the masses, Marxism-Leninism is the ideology of the Cuban people.

The establishment of the Marxist-Leninist party as the workers' vanguard party, has the full support of the people. The people approve the principle that that party should have the direction of the revolution in its hands. The people accept this basic principle of Marxism-Leninism. In such a situation, when all the people accept this principle, it was very easy to convert that apparatus, already accepted by the people, into an instrument for the pursuit of one's personal ambitions. The prestige of the ORI was immense. Any order, any directive coming from the ORI was obeyed by all. But the ORI was not the ORI.

Compañero Aníbal Escalante had schemed to make himself the ORI. How? By the use of a very simple contrivance. Working from his post as Secretary in Charge of Organization he would give instructions to all revolutionary cells and to the whole apparatus as if these instructions had come from the National Directorate. And he began to encourage them in the habit of receiving instructions from there, from the offices of the Secretary in Charge of Organization of the ORI, instructions which were obeyed by all as if they had come from the National Directorate. But at the same time he took advantage of the opportunity to establish a system of controls which would be completely under his command.

This policy was accompanied by that sectarianism which had been encouraged to the limit, a sectarianism which tended to create conditions favorable to the achievement of those aims. And being in a position to carry it out, since he also had the task of individually organizing all the revolutionary cells, a policy of license was encouraged rather than one of discipline, restraint, strict adherence to standards on the part of the organ-

ization's militants. Rather than this, a policy of permissiveness was encouraged. Since a correct policy, adjusted to those functions proper to a workers' vanguard party, did not fit with these plans, a policy of privilege was promoted. He was creating conditions and giving instructions which tended to convert that apparatus, not into an apparatus of the workers' vanguard, but rather into a nest of privilege, into one which tolerated favoritism, into a system of immunities and favors. Slowly he began to pervert completely the role of the apparatus.

In other words, the predominance and preponderance of the nucleus had to be created. There had to be a confusion of ideas. The idea is that the Marxist party gives guidance, that the workers' vanguard Marxist party directs the state, a direction which it can exercise only through the use of certain channels, and after receiving guidance emanating from the National Directorate. He attempted to establish a directorate on all levels. That is, something more than a directorate on all levels: a participation of the political apparatus in administrative matters, on all levels whence, with a frightful, deplorable and shameful confusion, the criterion was established that the nucleus gave all orders, that the nucleus could name and remove administrative personnel, that the nucleus governed.

And, as a result, a veritable chaos, a veritable anarchy was being introduced into the nation.

That, of course, is far removed from the idea of a workers' vanguard party, of a Marxist-Leninist party.

On the other hand, on the level of the Secretary in Charge of Organization, it already was impossible for a minister to change an official or to change an administrator without having to call the office of the ORI, because of habits which this *compañero* — by deceiving government officials, by making them think that he was acting under instructions from the National Directorate — tried to establish and succeeded in establishing to a large degree.

The nuclei decided and governed on all levels. When a ministry faced a problem, instead of solving it themselves, they would refer it to the ORI. This was so much so that if a cat gave birth to a litter of four kittens it was necessary to refer the matter to the ORI so they might decide upon it.

In other words, there no longer was a subject, a question, a detail, which did not first have to be discussed in the offices of the ORI. And many ministers would go there to discuss their problems; and under-secretaries no longer discussed the ministry's problems with the minister, instead they went to the offices of the ORI; and a security officer would no longer go to the offices of the security force, he went instead to the ORI.

Because of this there developed from top to bottom — don't imagine that this happened in a matter of weeks, it took months to develop — a truly abnormal, truly absurd, intolerable, chaotic, anarchic process; people were possessed of a mania for giving orders, of an eagerness to decide all problems.

And what was the nucleus? Was it a nucleus of revolutionists? The nucleus was a mere shell of revolutionists, well versed in dispensing favors, which appointed and removed officials and, as a result of this, it was not going to enjoy the prestige which a revolutionary nucleus should enjoy, a prestige born solely from the authority which it has in the eyes of the masses, an authority imparted to it by the example which its members set as workers, as model revolutionists. Instead of coming from these sources, the authority of the nucleus came from the fact that from it one might re-

ceive or expect a favor, some dispensation, or some harm or good. And as was to be expected, around the nucleus conditions were being created for the formation of a coterie of fawners, which has nothing to do with Marxism or with socialism.

And chaos reigned under those conditions. These are not the functions of the revolutionary nucleus. This is a perversion of the principles of Marxism-Leninism. This is a frightful confusion of socialist ideas. To begin with, this serves to create chaos, disaster, a monstrosity. A workers' Marxist-Leninist party directs the state, but it exercises this direction through proper channels; it exercises direction of the state through the National Directorate of that party, which has jurisdiction over the political apparatus and the public administration.

What is the function of the party? To orient. It orients on all levels, it does not govern on all levels. It fosters the revolutionary consciousness of the masses. It is the link with the masses. It educates the masses in the ideas of socialism and communism. It encourages the masses to work, to strong endeavor, to defend the revolution. It spreads the ideas of the revolution. It supervises, controls, guards, informs. It discusses what has to be discussed. But it does not have authority to appoint and to remove officials.

It is to be expected that if the nucleus is a revolutionary one it will have within it the best laborers, the best workers. It is logical, then, that when an administrator wants to choose a foreman or someone for any type of responsible position, it is logical that when he chooses one, he will find him within the nucleus because the nucleus will have gathered the most competent, the best. But the choosing will be done by the administrator, not by the nucleus. The nucleus does not have to choose officials. This is something which we learned to expect from the PAU, from the PUR, from the old Liberal Party, from the Conservative Party, from any old corrupt political party. But this is something which we do not expect from a workers' vanguard party. This is, simply, a reinfection of old political vices which our nation has lived through. This is not the responsibility of the nucleus.

The best revolutionists, the best workers, should be in the nucleus. The party should not weaken itself in order to buttress the state apparatus. The state apparatus must develop its own officials from the ranks. It does not have to have recourse to the nuclei in the peoples' farms, in the co-operatives. It does not have to bring in the official from the outside; he should simply be promoted from among its workers.

In any group of 500 workers, anyone may be sure of finding at least five generals, ten musicians, 20 artists. The fact is that in any mass of workers one will find an infinite variety of intelligence, of talents, of merit.

Where is the person who considers himself a Marxist who can deny that among the masses one will find represented all forms of human values, all human resources, all intellectual capacities? And who will believe that the possessors of these intellectual capacities, of these merits, must be promoted by the nucleus? The nuclei must work with all the masses. They must educate all the masses, but when a personnel manager is to be appointed, when an important post is to be filled, there is no need to go to the nucleus for it to pick him. He must be picked from among the masses; he must be promoted!

That is the task of the manager; that is the task of the state administration. The personnel for the functioning of the state must be chosen from the masses themselves, and all work centers should choose their personnel from the masses of workers; they should base the promotions of

their managers on the qualities they display as workers, according to their abilities. If not, it would become a problem of political chicanery, it would become a prize which someone could award. The nuclei would begin to be infested with flatterers and fawners, with position-seekers. That is not the function of the nucleus! The nucleus has other tasks. Its tasks are different from those of state administration. The party directs; it directs through the party as a whole, and it directs through the governmental apparatus.

Today an official must have authority. A minister must have authority, an administrator must have authority. He must be able to discuss whatever is necessary with the Technical Advisory Council. He must be able to discuss with the masses of workers; with the nucleus. But the administrator must decide; the responsibility must be his.

The party, through its National Directorate, endows the administrative personnel with authority. But in order to demand an accounting from them, it must endow them with true authority. If it is the nucleus which decides, if it decides at the provincial level, or at the level of the work center, or at the local level, how then can we make the minister responsible for these decisions? He cannot be made responsible because he has no power.

The minister has the power to appoint, to remove, to appoint within the norms established by the rules and the laws of the nation. But at the same time he is charged with responsibility; he is responsible to the political administration of the revolution for his actions, for his work. In a word, he must give an accounting of his stewardship. Now, to give an accounting he must have powers.

In Cuba, as a result of this chaos, of this irregularity, of this monstrosity, no minister, no official, no administrator had power. He had to go to the nucleus to discuss it. And we are going to give an example of this which *compañero* Carlos Rafael Rodriguez gave me today.

He found it necessary to remove — a matter which we discussed, but which did not need to be discussed — to remove the person in charge of a corporation, the Meat Corporation, because he considered him incompetent, for he was a person who really had the ability to manage only a small business, and did not have the ability required to handle the responsibilities of a gigantic undertaking like the Meat Corporation. What happened? He called him in; he informed him that he would be sent to another job which was more in consonance with his abilities. And what did the *compañero* do? He went to the nucleus in the INRA to charge that a grave injustice had been done him, and to demand that the matter be discussed with Carlos Rafael.

What a fix we'd be in! I mean that our goose would be cooked if we followed such procedures! What a sorry mix-up! To do this is to mistake the nucleus for a clique of gossipers. To do this is to mistake the nucleus for a privileged gang, for dispensers of patronage. And that habit of thinking had been introduced into the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations.

No minister could decide anything, because if the matter was not discussed with the nucleus, the offices of the ORI would have to be called. Can we imagine such a monstrosity? Can we imagine such an absurdity? *Compañeros*, can we imagine such a mess?

Things must be called by their right names. This does not mean that we are speaking with hate, nor harshly about anyone. We should analyze, censure, criticize seriously all these things.

It is logical to expect that the enemy will take advantage of these

errors to sow confusion, to go about saying that the communists have taken over; that Fidel had been replaced by Blas or by Aníbal, or by someone else, and Raúl by another, and so on about everyone else.

Compañeros, our enemies take advantage of our own errors, our enemies take advantage of our own stupidities. Do you want to know the reason for all those rumors? It was that obsession with command, that mania for giving orders, that mania for governing which took possession of a certain compañero together with a sectarianism promoted to unheard of extremes.

Was this power real? No, it was not a real power; it was a power in form only; it was a fictitious power. There was no real power in the hands of that compañero. Fortunately, there was no real power! The real power did not rest there. The real power of the revolution cannot simply be usurped in that fashion. It cannot be circumvented in that way, compañeros. That is a ridiculous and idiotic attempt at circumvention!

But behind that there plainly was an obvious intent. Of course, that type of evil cannot be developed in our country because our country is not prone to being meek nor to being tamed. Nor are revolutionists so inclined — the large number of revolutionary compañeros. But through the use of deception, the attempt was made to create conditions suitable for permitting the imposition of a tyranny, of a straitjacket, of an apparatus for the serving of personal ends which, later on, would wipe out the old and new values of the revolution.

Is this perhaps a problem of command, compañeros? A problem of of who commands and who does not? No, compañeros. If this were a problem of command, of who commands and who does not, we would not be gathered here—the compañeros of the National Directorate, the ministers — we would not be speaking here.

Really, for us, those types of problems having to do with command and government are so trivial that we believe they are not worth an hour of bitterness to a single man, to a family, to a compañero. The vanity to command and to govern — if men, all men, looked at things a little philosophically, at the realities of the world, of the universe, of history — these things would not happen.

If this were simply a problem of who commands, compañeros—or of who governs, or of who leads, if that is what was being discussed here, and not a basic problem of revolutionary principles, not matters which concerned the essence and the very life of the revolution, we would not be here; we would not be speaking here; we would be doing something else. Because, in truth, for us those things — government in and of itself, power in and of itself — such things do not interest us.

Besides, we did not run for government office, nor did we win power in a raffle, nor anything like it. It resulted from a series of historical circumstances, from a series of deeds. It resulted from a revolutionary process — some happened to play a certain role and others played another. Perhaps one of the most difficult roles fell to our lot, because these matters, these obligations carry with them difficult moments, moments like the present one, like many others that we have had!

If the matters here under discussion were matters concerning power and who governs, it would be well for any one of us to exercise his right to retire, to renounce all posts and everything else.

If matters which are basic for our nation were not under discussion, matters which are basic for our revolution, for the welfare of our nation;

if to avoid such matters would not mean that the revolution was headed toward an abyss, toward a bottomless pit, toward its own destruction, *compañeros*, these matters would not have to be laid open here, these matters would not have to be discussed, people would not have to be made aware of these matters.

It is not important who governs — what man governs or what his name might be. Who leads is not important — what man leads or what his name might be. The important thing is that he govern well; the important thing is that he lead the revolution where the revolution should go.

It was important to discuss this problem because it was vital to the revolution, basic for the revolution, simply because it was imperative to correct those errors, that incorrect and absurd policy, forced here into the midst of a revolutionary process filled with glory and greatness. The conditions which made possible such a state of affairs had to be rooted out and the conditions which permitted the organization and the functioning of a true workers' vanguard party had to be created.

It is natural that this should create a frightful sectarianism. This explains why that sectarianism was encouraged. This explains why that implacable, insatiable, incessant sectarianism, which was in evidence everywhere, appeared in every nook and cranny of the country, from one end of the country to the other, from the Punta de Maisi to Cabo de San Antonio [the east and west extremities of Cuba]. A series of attitudes, a series of deeds, was everywhere evident. Because that did not promote a true integration, *compañeros*. That introduced extraneous matter into the integration process and compelled the forces which had to integrate, which had to fuse to function as forces which had not integrated, which had not fused, and so, many months after the forces had been officially integrated one found someone who would come out and say: "No, not this one because he's not a member of the party." To what "party" was he referring if there already was a new organization here? "No, not this one because he's a member of the party" and again "He's from the party, from the party." And a veritable chaos began to be created.

This, naturally, was added to a whole series of contradictions. It was added on to a whole series of problems, to a long list of subjects, arguments, wrongs.

We have referred to this on some other occasion and we severely criticized any type of sectarianism, the sectarianism of those who had fought in the mountains and the sectarianism of those who had been militants for 20 years.

On December 2 or 3, on the day we spoke of Marxism-Leninism, we explained here how we had to fight against all types of sectarianism, against the one who had been a militant for 20 years and against the one who said, "I fought in the mountains." And we have been unyielding in our criticism of all those who espoused the sectarianism of those who had been in the mountains. We criticized them severely and we were firm. We did not tolerate those manifestations of sectarianism. We criticized them very severely. And we always called on the people to unite, and we always told the people that all those who did not have the opportunity to fight before should not be discouraged, that ahead of them there were many opportunities, that all of history before them waited to be written, that the revolution had barely begun and a long road lay ahead of us.

And we censured the folly of individuals who flaunted in others' faces that sectarianism born of the fact that they had fought in the mountains;

that he had been in the mountains; that he had been here and had been there. This is all well and good, but another type of sectarianism arose: the sectarianism of the 15 and 20-year militant, which was not opposed at the proper time, which was not opposed correctly, *compañeros*; forgetting the fact that the number of communists in our country was very small, because the enemy, as we have explained on more than one occasion, did not let up on his slanderous campaigns against Marxism, against socialism. It created very difficult conditions; it surrounded and isolated the Marxist-Leninist party in our country.

When a whole people becomes revolutionary, when a whole people, that is to say, when the immense majority of our people, embraces Marxism-Leninism, how absurd is it then to fall into the sectarianism of the "old militants"; to boast about the number of years of one's militancy; to see it manifest itself in the work centers! And then for everyone to become aware that it was more than a verbal sectarianism, that in order to hold a post of personnel director, to be able to fill certain posts in factories or in offices, the best-paid jobs, one had to belong to that sect. I do not mean by this that I am calling the old Marxist-Leninist party a sect; rather I call the spirit which they created, or which was created after integration, the spirit of a sect.

What hope remained for the great masses of laborers, for the great masses of workers? What kind of situation did millions of citizens find themselves in? For, while the old communists had been only a few thousand, the people, who had embraced the cause of Marxism-Leninism, had been integrated by the millions.

It requires little intelligence — if a little is all one has — to realize that application of such a policy upon someone's flaunting his record of militancy, accompanied by the fact that lack of that stamp of approval in that sect was enough to leave people without the least hope of being chosen for anything, either for a post as technician, for a responsible post on a state farm, on a cooperative, in municipal or provincial government, in the JUCEI [Coordination, Application and Inspection Council], or in the national government. The folly, the idiocy, the negative nature and the stupidity of such a policy then became obvious.

To what did such a state of affairs give rise? To vanity, to a domination of influence, to privilege. What would this engender but conditions which would earn the old communists the antipathy and the suspicion of the masses? What else would it produce but the conditions which, moreover, were going to lead an old communist to take the wrong course, the wrong road in his life, in his work, in his attitude?

Add to this the indulgence of errors. Add to this the fact that if an old communist made mistakes, nothing was done to him; he was not removed from his post, nor was he disciplined in any way; on the contrary, his errors were tolerated, no matter what the error, the abuse or the injustice committed.

Of course, that was not a policy applied to the masses, nor was it generalized, but it was an established method for the indulgence of all faults: to create a caste spirit, to create a clique spirit, because all of that fitted very well with a policy which aimed at creating an apparatus for the satisfaction of personal ambitions and aims. It is evident that not only was the privilege of a sect created but also indulgence of all faults; *compañeros* were appointed to many posts who, in many cases, lacked the capacity to fill them. This was not so in other cases, let us be fair.

Those were the results. It was natural that a feeling of great personal

power was created, and this was so much so that some *compañeros* had lost all sense of control. They imagined that they had won the revolution in a raffle. At least, that is the way they acted, forgetting the blood which was spilled, the sacrifices which this revolution had cost.

I am going to cite some examples, I am going to cite an example from Oriente Province of a certain gentleman who is Secretary, or was Secretary of the Sectional Committee of Bayamo and who was later appointed ORI Secretary of no less than of a group of peoples' farms of El Cauto; a gentleman by the name of Fidel Pompa — he's probably still there as secretary — who was appointed to such an important post by mysterious and extraordinary means, by the use of that sectarian magic and of the cult of personality, of the true cult of personality, not what some entirely mistaken individuals take to be the cult of personality.

When the list of *compañeros* who had been appointed to the National Directorate appeared, this gentleman, evidencing the mentality of a Nazi *gauleiter* and not the mentality of a Marxist — for there were gentlemen who were assuming the airs of *gauleiters* and not those of Marxist militants — took the liberty of commenting before two *compañeros*, who had been placed in charge of that administrative board, and before a Spanish technician who works there with them; he took the liberty of making comments like the following when he saw the list: "What is this filthy fat man doing here? — he was referring to *compañero* Aragón. He also used another word which I don't want to repeat in public. "And who is this Guillermo García?" he said. "Where did this person come from?" "And this Sergio del Valle, who is he?" "And this Haydée Santamaría, what is she doing here?" Those were the observations made by this individual.

Who was this individual? Why didn't he know Haydée Santamaría? Why didn't he know Guillermo García? Why didn't he know Sergio del Valle? Why didn't he know anybody? Simply because when the people were fighting here, he was under the bed.

How was he to know that Guillermo García was the first *campesino* to join the revolutionary forces, a man who earned his rank by fighting in battle after battle, in a war which lasted 25 months? How was he to know that he was one of the few who joined the fight and survived? He was a comrade in countless battles, modest, of extraordinary merits in this revolution. How was he to know Sergio del Valle, a doctor who, after the battles were over, stayed alone with the wounded, surrounded by the troops of the tyranny, attending to the sick, saving lives, and that he later joined the combat forces and marched with Camilo Cienfuegos as second-in-command of that glorious invasion, thereby earning great prestige and the admiration of all? How was he to know Sergio del Valle if he was under the bed? If I use the same word repeatedly it is simply because it is the only word that fits.

How was he to know Haydée Santamaría, the *compañera* who saw her brother die, a brother whom she loved profoundly; the *compañera* who was shown the gouged-out eyes of her brother whom she deeply loved; the steadfast *compañera*, the loyal *compañera*, the *compañera* who did not weaken through a whole process of difficult and bloody struggle; the heroic *compañera* whose name appeared very often during the years of struggle? How is this gentleman to know the names of these people without whom, without whose efforts, he might still possibly be under the bed?

From the Cauto River this gentleman was only a day's march from the Sierra Maestra. It shouldn't have been too much for him to grab a knapsack, when Cowley was murdering workers and *campesinos*; when Cowley murdered Loynas Echevarría and so many other militant revolutionists whom he killed

that he had been in the mountains; that he had been here and had been there. This is all well and good, but another type of sectarianism arose: the sectarianism of the 15 and 20-year militant, which was not opposed at the proper time, which was not opposed correctly, *compañeros*; forgetting the fact that the number of communists in our country was very small, because the enemy, as we have explained on more than one occasion, did not let up on his slanderous campaigns against Marxism, against socialism. It created very difficult conditions; it surrounded and isolated the Marxist-Leninist party in our country.

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power was created, and this was so much so that some *companeros* had lost all sense of control. They imagined that they had won the revolution in a raffle. At least, that is the way they acted, forgetting the blood which was spilled, the sacrifices which this revolution had cost.

I am going to cite some examples, I am going to cite an example from Oriente Province of a certain gentleman who is Secretary, or was Secretary of the Sectional Committee of Bayamo and who was later appointed ORI Secretary of no less than of a group of peoples' farms of El Cauto; a gentleman by the name of Fidel Pompa — he's probably still there as secretary — who was appointed to such an important post by mysterious and extraordinary means, by the use of that sectarian magic and of the cult of personality, of the true cult of personality, not what some entirely mistaken individuals take to be the cult of personality.

When the list of *companeros* who had been appointed to the National Directorate appeared, this gentleman, evidencing the mentality of a Nazi *gauleiter* and not the mentality of a Marxist — for there were gentlemen who were assuming the airs of *gauleiters* and not those of Marxist militants — took the liberty of commenting before two *companeros*, who had been placed in charge of that administrative board, and before a Spanish technician who works there with them; he took the liberty of making comments like the following when he saw the list: "What is this filthy fat man doing here? — he was referring to *companero* Aragones. He also used another word which I don't want to repeat in public. "And who is this Guillermo Garcia?" he said. "Where did this person come from?" "And this Sergio del Valle, who is he?" "And this Haydee Santamaría, what is she doing here?" Those were the observations made by this individual.

Who was this individual? Why didn't he know Haydee Santamaría? Why didn't he know Guillermo Garcia? Why didn't he know Sergio del Valle? Why didn't he know anybody? Simply because when the people were fighting here, he was under the bed.

How was he to know that Guillermo Garcia was the first *campesino* to join the revolutionary forces, a man who earned his rank by fighting in battle after battle, in a war which lasted 25 months? How was he to know that he was one of the few who joined the fight and survived? He was a comrade in countless battles, modest, of extraordinary merits in this revolution. How was he to know Sergio del Valle, a doctor who, after the battles were over, stayed alone with the wounded, surrounded by the troops of the tyranny, attending to the sick, saving lives, and that he later joined the combat forces and marched with Camilo Cienfuegos as second-in-command of that glorious invasion, thereby earning great prestige and the admiration of all? How was he to know Sergio del Valle if he was under the bed? If I use the same word repeatedly it is simply because it is the only word that fits.

How was he to know Haydee Santamaría, the *compañera* who saw her brother die, a brother whom she loved profoundly; the *compañera* who was shown the gouged-out eyes of her brother whom she deeply loved; the steadfast *compañera*, the loyal *compañera*, the *compañera* who did not weaken through a whole process of difficult and bloody struggle; the heroic *compañera* whose name appeared very often during the years of struggle? How is this gentleman to know the names of these people without whom, without whose efforts, he might still possibly be under the bed?

From the Cauto River this gentleman was only a day's march from the Sierra Maestra. It shouldn't have been too much for him to grab a knapsack, when Cowley was murdering workers and *campesinos*; when Cowley murdered Loynas Echevarría and so many other militant revolutionists whom he killed

in a cowardly and cruel manner in a single night; when the workers, the *campesinos*, the students were being murdered by the thousands, and he had only to walk one day in order to join the revolutionary forces.

What right does this gentleman have now, like a *gauleiter*, to pass judgment on historic names, and not only that but to say at the end of his commentary: "Well, we are going to sweep out all of these people, little by little." What is this? What true Marxist can act that way? What true communist can have a mind like that — ridiculous, vain, immoral, grotesquely absurd? What communist what true revolutionist can be such an ingrate?

And what should the proper attitude be for a man who saved his own skin while others were dying? He should at least have a little respect, a little modesty; he should be a little less overbearing.

Men like Fidel Pompa are not the only ones; there are more. Those are the individuals whom we have to find inside the organization! And those are the individuals whom we have to sweep out; those are the ones whom we really have to sweep out, to sweep out!

I would never fall into the error of comparing such a despicable character with any good communist. My concept of what constitutes a communist is much too high, of what constitutes a true communist, of how the communists have had to struggle everywhere, of the millions of heroes, of the martyrs whom the proletarian fighters have lost along the way. The memory of Stalingrad is too strong in my mind. The memory of the 18 million Soviet people who fell is too strong in my mind. The memory of Julius Fucik is too much before me. The memory of so many international communists, that is, of those of other countries and of the communists of our own country, of those who were murdered in the month of December by Cowley's hordes, of Jesús Menéndez, of Mella, of Villena, of José María Pérez, of so many others who were murdered, proletarian fighters who fell while serving the cause of Marxism, their memory is too much in my mind for me to fall into the error of thinking for even a minute that a true communist could be compared with such a despicable character.

But how could such a contemptible character be appointed to a responsible post? How could he be appointed secretary of such an important group of organizations? This was made possible by the conditions to which we referred earlier, by that sectarian policy, by that egotistical policy, by that wrong policy, by that misguided policy.

And through the use of such people an apparatus can be built up, through that and through the exploitation of Marxism's prestige, through the exploitation of the authority which the revolution enjoys with the people, through the exploitation of the authority which revolutionary ideas have with the masses, through the creation of conditions which will permit individuals such as this one to exert undue influence. And in this way a party of tamed and unconditional followers, of conceited individuals, of vain individuals, can be built up. This is not the only case. There are others which can be cited.

Like the other individual, who, at a dinner in one of the embassies after my speech of March 13, asserted that Fidel had spoken for — that "what Fidel said had value for that part of the masses which followed him." And what could the other part of the masses be, the part which does not really follow him? The one which doesn't follow the line of the revolution?

That man is called Varela — let's call them by their names, so that these mistaken people may be known by all — and he's a swindler who works in the Foreign Ministry and who, so they say, is a bit of a soak.

But, well, these characters are overbearing in their ways. "Fidel

spoke for that part of the masses which follows him." What do I care, individually and personally, whether the masses do as I say. That is important only from a revolutionary point of view. But the gentlemen who think in that way forget the masses who followed the revolutionary line, the masses who, acting with the strength of a torrent, wiped out the tyranny, who wiped out imperialist domination in our country; these masses who have not been betrayed; these masses who gave us a great many attributes, a great deal of power, a power which we have not abused, a power which we have shared, a power which we have tried to use for the well-being of our country. We have not used it to advance any personal ends, because, after all is said and done, what personal benefits could we gain from this struggle? We, who have been fortunate to see so many dreams, so many expectations, so many hopes realized, who have had the privilege which neither Martí, nor Maceo, nor Máximo Gómez, nor Guiteras, nor Mella, nor Céspedes, nor Agramonte, nor any of our Founding Fathers have had. We who have seen our flag waving as a completely free, independent and sovereign flag, who have seen the name of our nation circle the globe, filled with prestige, to what personal benefits could we aspire?

We do not speak for that part of the masses which follows us. With honesty, honesty and forthrightness, free of passion and egotism, we speak for the revolutionary masses, as revolutionary leaders should speak.

And similarly, how many other things had like origins? Like those who, in a high fever after having barely read a little Marxist book, or having read it before and not having understood it, went about saying that *History Will Absolve Me* was a reactionary document.

Very well now, how could that gentleman presume to know so much about philosophy and revolution? No, sir. We do not expect that *History Will Absolve Me* will come to be considered a Marxist classic. No, sir. Speaking in all modesty, *History Will Absolve Me* is the expression of a progressive mind, of an evolving revolutionary mind. It was not yet the expression of a Marxist mind but it was the expression of the mind of a young man who was leaning towards Marxism and who was beginning to act like a Marxist. But its value does not lie in its theoretical, economic and political content.

Its lasting value resides in that it was a living denunciation of all the errors and crimes of the tyranny, that it exposed that regime so atrociously cruel and cowardly, so tyrannical and murderous. But, above all, the little merit which *History Will Absolve Me* may have rests simply in that it was a denunciation made in the midst of a hundred soldiers' bayonets, of soldiers whose hands had been stained with the blood of eighty of our *compañeros*.

The voicing of that denunciation there — today anyone can get up on a platform and deliver a great speech, calmly, without difficulty, without policemen, without a shot being fired, without receiving any blows. But to have voiced it under those conditions, where there was no guarantee for anyone's life, to denounce those things then was a task a bit more difficult than that of posing as a revolutionist now.

History Will Absolve Me does not have to be read in the schools for revolutionary instruction. It is not a Marxist classic. It is the expression of a developing mind, of a series of ideas which have been a constant concern of revolutionists. And it is a living denunciation made when that denunciation had to be made, at the risk of one's life.

If we followed that line it could be said that *The Manifesto of Monte Cristi* [issued by José Martí and Máximo Gómez in the Dominican Republic

prior to Marti's sailing for Cuba in 1895] was a reactionary document; that the *Declaration of the Rights of Man* of 1789 was a reactionary document. What trash, what sawdust must have gotten into the brain of a person who thinks that way.

And there was another individual who said that the attack on the Moncada Barracks had been an error; that the *Granma* landing had been an error. Very well. We are not interested in these matters from a personal point of view and if we discuss them we do so merely to analyze them because we must be rid, once and for all, of all these people who talk so much trash. Let us be rid of all these babblers!

We, and only we, after all the experience we have acquired, after all that we have learned of military matters in this struggle, have a right to discuss and to determine whether, under given conditions and in the light of our present experience, we would undertake the attack on the Moncada Barracks; whether we would carry out the landing from the *Granma* in the way we did or in some other. Of course, we have much more experience now than we had then. Well then, if we had now the same experience that we had then, it is quite possible that we would do again what we did then.

But now, with our present experience and enriched by that experience — and who will deny that men act precisely in accordance with what they know and in accordance with existing conditions — one could calmly begin to analyze these tactics better; one might decide to attack another barracks instead of this one, or to swim in; instead of coming by boat, one might come in by airplane, or by infiltration; one could become a frogman and land on the coast. In short, one could have done any one of these things.

What is at issue in the matter of the Moncada Barracks and the *Granma* are not the deeds but the line, the correct line, the line of armed struggle; not the corrupt political line, the electioneering line, but the line of armed struggle against the Batista tyranny, a line which history proved to be the correct one.

Is it possible to be so deaf, so blind, so nearsighted and so idiotic as to ignore the lessons of history, and to be unable to draw the lessons which are to be drawn from history?

I bring up these cases in order to cite a few examples. People argue many foolish things! They argue about things they don't understand. They argue about history, about the role of each organization and of each thing. And to what purpose? Some day history will be written objectively. History may be made; the people, the masses, make history. We have said it before and we believe that the masses are the makers of history; they are the architects of history. Now, history may be made, but it cannot be falsified. It may be made but it cannot be rewritten. There is only one history, and you cannot write it according to your subjective wishes. And all subjective histories must be discarded in order to make way for all real history, all true history.

The revolution is the result of a long process of struggle which began with our forefathers in 1868 and which comes to fruition today, now, and which will continue to advance. It had different stages, different battles. The history of the present stage began on the 26th of July 1953 as the history of the struggle of 1868 began on the 10th of October of 1868 and that of the War of Independence, or what was called the War of Independence, began on February 24, 1865.

That is the true history. Why then argue the matter? What does all this display of eagerness serve? What is gained by that? What do we win by that? And some day the history of the Cuban nation will have to be written. Some day the history of political ideas, the history of the present period will have

to be written and then the role played by everyone, the value of everyone's efforts, without denying anybody his just deserts, will be known.

And when the history of political ideas is written, who will be able to deny Mella's worth? Who will be able to deny the worth of the founders of the Cuban Marxist-Leninist party, of the extraordinary role which they played in disseminating Marxist, anti-imperialist and socialist ideas among the workers, among the people? All this is aside from all the rest of the effort, aside from their love for their work among the workers during the revolution.

Some day true and objective history will be written. Perhaps we ourselves will help to write it because some day, when we no longer have before us the matters which we have today, we will discuss, analyze, criticize calmly, quietly, objectively, honestly, the errors made and the successes achieved and everything else. We will undertake the writing of the objective history of our country.

Why go around arguing? What do we gain by that? Why, if no one wants to deny anyone his just due? Why go around playing the role of the philosophers of history, when in reality we may be playing the role of the fools of history? These are useless arguments!

We, the revolutionary leaders, one day will have to sit down to discuss in order to draw those lessons that were useful for our generation, for future generations, for the peoples of our sister republics of Latin America, so that they may draw the pertinent lessons from our successes and from our errors.

We have never found ourselves in that situation. We have always "rendered unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, and to God that which is God's."

Of course, it was important that we speak of these things one day.

I have some further things to say. This whole attitude gives rise to injustices, to errors, to mistakes. As an example, we may cite the injustices committed against many of those who were old *compañeros* of the Rebel Army. One day we went to a place where we met more than 100 officers whom we had seen participate in many battles. — What are you doing now? Aren't you leading troops? — No.

What happened to these *compañeros*? Well, because they were of a "low political level" they were not placed in charge of troops. Ah! A "low political level." And what is a "low political level"? How are they going to come around now and speak of "low" and "high political levels" when we are dealing with *compañeros* who made the revolution, who fought the war and brought it to a successful conclusion, who have led, who have made possible the triumph of the socialist revolution?

How could one have fought for a socialist revolution and then have someone say that those who struggled and fought for that revolution and were loyal to that revolution and who, in moments when people might be expected to waver, did not waver, and who were always ready to die, and who mobilized themselves when the mercenaries came, and who died fighting the mercenaries after it had been declared that this was a socialist revolution. How could they be removed from their commands for being of a "low political level" and then put in his place some bachelor of arts who can recite from memory a Marxist catechism even though he doesn't apply it? So, any bachelor of arts whatever, who didn't fight and who never felt any inclination to fight, that bachelor of arts has a higher political level and should be in charge of troops! Is this Marxism? Is this Leninism?

Then, how many *compañeros*, even Camilo Cienfuegos, would have been removed by them from the command of a column of invaders or of a body of troops. And they probably would have placed in command any bachelor of arts who could speak a little better, who could parrot Marxist and

Leninist matters a little better.

When Camilo was placed in command of the Invasion Column [the section of the Rebel Army which in 1958 carried the revolution from the Sierra Maestra to central Cuba.], we, who knew that he was a revolutionist of integrity, completely honest, conscious that he was fighting for a just cause, with a complete revolutionary soul, with the makings of a communist, for that is how Camilo was -- one must see his books, his writings, his unifying spirit expressed in his letters when he spoke of Félix Torres when he was with him in Las Villas -- we did not say to that generous, heroic *compañero*, who was a lion in battle, who was all agility and expertness, who extricated his troops from difficult situations, we did not say to him: "Recite Capital!" Rather, the only thing that interested us when we appointed him was to know who he was, what stuff he was made of and to know that he had the ability to lead those troops to Pinar del Río Province, where he would have led them if he had not received orders to remain in Las Villas.

Perhaps, now, as a result of those paradoxes and ironies, someone might come around to give him a test on Marxism-Leninism and he would have failed it, and he would have handed the command of his troops over to some bachelor of arts who had received a little military training. And something similar might have happened to Ciro Frías, to Ciro Redondo, to Paz, to so many others who fell, who were of *campesino* origin, of humble beginnings, who fought because they bore in their consciousness the spirit and instinct of rebellion of the exploited class, who were fighters for their class, heroes of their class.

How absurd to find that men who were willing to die to make possible a revolution such as this one, who would have given their lives for it, that in spite of this they would have to be removed from command of their troops because of their low political level! I say that that is a folly, an injustice, a policy lacking in Marxist, proletarian, Leninist sense.

And these things have happened, *compañeros*, and it is the product of a sectarianism which we should eradicate.

They are truly painful, inevitable corrections which we should make.

Very well, then. How could such things happen in a party? There you have that matter which has been discussed so much, the problem of the cult of personality. Perhaps an example of what we, or at least of what I, understand as the cult of personality could serve as the subject of a good lesson for political instructors to give the troops and for principals to give in the schools, which has nothing to do with the prestige of the leaders, which has nothing to do with the authority of the leaders, as it seems some, thinking in reverse, have thought. Who thought about the things that were happening, things which were not so difficult to see? Recently, we could, at least, see this phenomenon in operation. Most likely there were some who thought that these problems had to do with us; who thought that we had to be watched to see if we were likely to fall into the errors of the cult of personality.

Of course, such an idea, such a doubt, never entered our minds, because we know that those problems do not exist in our country, rather the reverse. Now I ask myself: Why did we argue so much about this problem, if we were incapable of seeing what was happening before our very noses? Certainly this problem did not arise from the danger that the Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government would allow himself to be seduced by the cult of personality.

Whether we wanted to or not, even if we ourselves did not want to,

they do not interest us, honestly; those problems do not interest us personally. They interest us only from the point of view of whether or not they can do harm or good to the revolution, whether they can be useful or useless to the people, to the present generation, the coming generations.

But for the benefit of those through whose minds there might pass the thought that we could even remotely be suspect of having such inclinations, it is good to recall certain deeds, certain deeds as evidenced by the fact that we waged a war, we led it, we won it, and there are no general's stars on our shoulders and no medals hang from our chests. And the first law which we proposed when we assumed governmental power prohibited the erection of statues — these problems related to the cult of personality were not discussed as much then as they are now — but out of deep conviction we proposed prohibiting the erection of statues of living persons, naming streets after living persons and, what is more, that the placing of our portraits in government offices be prohibited by law. This we did from deep conviction, from deep revolutionary conviction. Was this demagogic? No. We acted this way from profound revolutionary conviction.

Great responsibilities fell on our shoulders. The masses of our country placed great powers in our hands which we have shared with others as it was fitting that we should do, as it was correct for us to do, as it was our duty to do.

I believe sincerely and firmly in the principles of collective leadership but no one forced me to do so, rather it came from a deep and personal conviction, a conviction with which I have known how to comply. I believe what I said on December 2: I believe in collective leadership; I believe that history is written by the masses; I believe that when the best opinions, the opinions of the most competent men, the most capable men, are discussed collectively, that they are cleansed of their vices, of their errors, of their weaknesses, of their faults. I also believe that neither the history of countries, nor the lives of nations, should be dependent on individuals, on men, on personalities. I state that which I firmly believe.

Why do I make this clear? Very well, because we have also made, among others, this error. We have many things to discuss about the problems of Marxism, about the whole rich and vital history of Marxism, about the struggle of Marxism against the revisionist, against the perversers of its principles. We have much to learn from Lenin, much to learn from the history of Marxism from its beginnings to the present day.

Many times in the schools, in many places we have discussed this same subject of the cult of personality excessively, to our way of thinking. Not because it bothers us, *compañeros*. As far as we are concerned people can discuss these problems till they breathe their last; it doesn't bother us.

But I ask myself the following question: Why have we been discussing a problem so much which was not our problem but the Soviet Union's? All right. We should be well informed. We should inform, discuss, if they are problems which have to do with the experience of Marxism, but we didn't have to turn it into the central theme of our discussions. For we have much more important things to discuss and this means that we are doing something like the following: that we are waging a campaign against the bubonic plague when, instead of the bubonic plague, there is malaria and poliomyelitis. It is true we don't want to be attacked by the bubonic plague, and we should be vaccinated against it and take the necessary measures and, in addition, we should know what the bubonic plague is. But when we have to fight we should fight against malaria and poliomyelitis which are the actual and present ills.

Those evils have not been a threat in our country. The only danger there was was the one we did not see. How blind we were! What a difference between theory and practice! What a good lesson! Much discussion was conducted on a subject while, all the time, we ran the risk of misleading many people and yet, no matter how much we discussed the subject, we did not see the evil that was close by.

Many were saying: "The cult of personality – is the same thing going to happen here as in the Soviet Union? Could the Prime Minister be one of those who will have to be watched to prevent his falling into the evils of the cult of personality?"

Very well. I don't think that there was a show of bad faith in this, nor anything like it. I am sure that the problem here was not one of a lack of information. These matters were amply discussed. But the point is that there are many people around who are on the wrong track; there are many people who are confused as to what are the most timely subjects, the most basic. We lack skills; we exercise no care and we get off the right track. That is why we take the wrong train.

To my mind many of those rumors, all those campaigns, and this whole problem which was taking shape within our country has to do, in part, with the undue discussion of a subject which should not have been the principal subject of our discussion.

And it is clear that what took place in an unconscious and spontaneous manner aided in the creation of the other problem, of the other phenomenon: the destruction of the prestige of the revolution. Why? For the more prestige the revolution has, so much the better; the more voices, which speak with authority, possessed by the revolution, so much the better. For it is not the same to have a choral group of ten people as it is to have one of three hundred. When you see a choral group of ten members it is good, but one of three hundred voices is much better, more beautiful, more excellent. If we have one leader, two, ten, with prestige, we should have more leaders with prestige. We should not destroy those leaders who have prestige. What happens if we destroy them? Then, unfortunately, when difficult times come the people do not have anyone in whom to believe. When we have to face situations similar or worse to what we faced at Playa Giron, when all at once we have to face situations ten times worse than what we faced at Playa Giron, then we have to speak with the people; we have to appeal to the people's faith.

And what do we gain by sowing the least doubt? What do we gain by destroying the prestige of the revolution?

Of course, I do not place the least blame on any honest revolutionist, on any of the many *companeros*, on any of those who have spoken on this subject. No, but I understand, *companeros*, that conditions were being created that unfortunately that discussion – the same thing would result if we started now discussing things which must be discussed later on. For to discuss them now would cause damage. They would not be in consonance with present needs.

Later on we will discuss other problems which existed at the time those discussions were undertaken for, unfortunately, they coincided with certain campaigns which were directed against certain *companeros*, campaigns which were being conducted in a very subtle manner, certain campaigns that were directed against the prestige of certain well-known and very valuable *companeros* which sprang from the same problem which we have posed; a series of subtle campaigns directed against a number of very

valuable *companeros* of the revolution, conducted, *companeros*, by those who were promoting the same sectarian policy..

How did this affect the masses? Well, clearly this discouraged the masses. Did this turn the masses against the revolution? No, the masses did not turn against the revolution, the masses are with the revolution and they will always be with the revolution, in spite of its errors. But they cooled the enthusiasm of the masses; they cooled the fervor of the masses.

How did this affect the political organization of the revolution? Very simply, *companeros*. We were not creating an organization; I already said that we were preparing a yoke, a straitjacket. I'm going to go a little further: we were creating a mere shell of an organization. How? The masses had not been integrated. We speak here of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations. It was an organization composed of the militants of the Partido Socialista Popular.

The rest of the organizations, the Student Directorate, the 26th of July, what were they? Were they organizations which had an old organized membership? No. They were organizations which had great mass support, they had an overwhelming mass support. That is what the 26th of July was; that is what the other organizations were. They enjoyed great prestige, great popularity. These people were not organized into an organization.

If we are going to form an organization, an integration, and we do not integrate the masses, we will not be integrating anything; we will be falling into a sectarianism like that we fell into.

Then how were the nuclei [units of the Integrated Revolutionary Organization (ORI)] formed? I'm going to tell you how. In every province the general secretary of the PSP was made general secretary of the ORI; in all the nuclei, the general secretary of the PSP was made general secretary of the ORI; in every municipality, the general secretary of the PSP was made general secretary of the ORI; in every nucleus, the general secretary – the member of the PSP – was made general secretary of the nucleus. Is that what you would call integration? *Compañero* Aníbal Escalante is responsible for that policy.

What resulted from this? What consequences did it have? All that we have done to fight against anti-communism, the ideological struggle, the incessant explaining, which slowly destroyed anti-communism – for anti-communism, as we ourselves have said, engendered sectarianism in its turn, because the isolated, harassed Marxist-Leninists tended to protect themselves closely within their own organization, to shut themselves up in their organization.

Very well. Those are the consequences of anti-communism, of harassment; they engender sectarianism. Once anti-communism is wiped out, if extreme sectarianism still remains, it will once again give rise to anti-communism and to confusion. Because many people will ask: "Is this communism? Is this Marxism? Is this socialism? – this arbitrariness, this abuse, this privilege, all this, is this communism?"

"If this is communism," they will say along with the Indian Hatuey, "then" When the Indian Hatuey was being burned at the stake, a priest came up to him to ask him if he wanted to go to heaven, and he said, "No, I don't want to go to heaven if heaven is all of this." Do you understand me? I have to speak clearly.

No one should have the least doubt, and I think that anyone who has it now must be completely crazy – let's use that word. At the present time I must speak with extraordinary objectivity, but with an extraordinary object-

ivity, frankness, loyalty, honesty, keep back nothing. Because we will make sure that our words will not be misunderstood, *compañeros*.

Very well, then, that sectarianism fosters anti-communism anew. What Marxist-Leninist mind could think of employing—when the socialist revolution is in power—the methods employed when Marxism-Leninism was not in power, when it was completely surrounded and isolated? To isolate oneself from the masses when one is in power, that is madness. It is another matter to be isolated by the ruling classes, by the exploiters, when the *latifundistas* [great landowners] and the imperialists are in power; but to be divorced from the masses when the workers, the *campesinos*, when the working class is in power, is a crime. Then sectarianism becomes counter-revolutionary because it weakens and harms the revolution.

What should be the ideal of a Marxist-Leninist? "These are my ideals, this is my cause." For many years we were but a handful — ten thousand, fifteen thousand of those who were truly Marxist-Leninists. How then, at the very time in which that same cause, his cause, his standard, his ideal, is the ideal of three million Cubans, is he going to isolate himself from the masses and act exactly as he did when there were five thousand, ten thousand or fifteen thousand? That is a gigantic error. To fall into an error of that nature is a crime, a counter-revolutionary crime. How can we do that when we can count on the strength of the masses?

The organizational framework for those masses must be built. That framework must be built with new forces, with new cadres, not with a reduced number of cadres as when the organization was very small, when the Marxist-Leninist party had a few thousand adherents. When Marxism-Leninism has millions of adherents in our country, the framework for those millions must be built. To do otherwise is, as we have said on other occasions, like wanting to empty the Cauto River [Cuba's longest river]; I mean, like wanting to empty the Amazon River into the Cauto River, like wanting to empty a vat into a cask and like wanting to build a 40-story building on top of a building having only two stories. It would come crashing down *compañeros*! It would mean isolation from the masses!

And we have fallen into that error. From the Marxist-Leninist point of view that is a grave error, an unforgivable error, an error which must be corrected.

What was the result of this? Very simply. The organization of the revolutionary nuclei was begun, but the nuclei were secret; they were secret. Can you conceive of secret contacts with the masses? And can you conceive of forming a secret nucleus exactly as it would have been formed under Batista? That is to say, nuclei which the masses did not know?

And then, what did we do? Well, in a work center with 5,000 workers we had a nucleus with seven members. Begging *compañero* Llanusa's pardon I am going to cite the case of the Sports Palace.

Garrucho and two women to whom he gave employment — Who is Garrucho? We are not going to argue over who Garrucho was. Garrucho was elected councilman on the PUR [Partido Unión Revolucionario — a Batista party] ticket in the year 1954. Then the branch of the Partido Socialista Popular of Regla made an error, to our way of thinking — we should speak with frankness for we are neither accusing, nor blaming anyone, nor anything like it. Let us forget all that. Now we should all speak about all things without prejudice, without vacillation. They erred because he repented, because the man said that he was willing to resign. And then he was made a member of the Partido Socialista Popular. Well, then he was allowed to remain at his post. I don't know but to my mind that was a wrong tactic for the branch to use — it was

the branch, not the party – but the fact is that that man filled the post of councilman up to the very 31st of December [1958].

Then all of a sudden, in spite of the hatred in which the councilmen of the PAU [Partido Acción Unitaria – like the PUR, one of Batista's parties] and the PUR were held, and all that had anything to do with them, we find that man promoted from councilman – hero of the PUR to revolutionary leader. Very well. This could be explained. It was the result of an error. It is undeniable that it was an error to admit him – it is the same as – well, why should I cite examples. I have one but I do not want to remember those poor people now, for I am going to hurt them for no reason at all.

Well then, Garrucho ended up in the INDER [National Institute of Sports, Physical Education and Recreation]. He brought a secretary and another girl to work there. I believe they are excellent girls; nothing is known against them. And there Garrucho turned out to be an important functionary. He was sent from the office of the provincial government or from who knows where to Llanusa and he was given an important post.

When we went to see the kind of nucleus that the INDER had, we found that it consisted of seven members out of 400 employees. And there were 20 or 30 excellent, superb people, and they were only seven: Garrucho, the two women, Llanusa, his secretary and two old communists, Ezequiel Herrera and Pancho Lopez. That was the nucleus. That was our contact with the masses there, our secret contact with a mass consisting of 400 employees. Would you call that a political apparatus?

Very well, Llanusa formed part of the nucleus because he was Llanusa and he was the director of the INDER, and I believe that *compañero* Llanusa has a right to belong to the nucleus. As to the secretary, well I believe she belonged because she was Llanusa's secretary, although I understand that she is an excellent girl. But there were others who were not lucky enough to be Llanusa's secretary. There were other excellent girls there but since they did not enter with Garrucho they could not form part of the nucleus. And there were two old communists there. One, Ezequiel Herrera, an excellent worker, who was proclaimed as a model worker there by the masses. What a joy, what a feeling of satisfaction we experienced when we saw a member of the nucleus proclaimed there a model worker by the masses! That was Ezequiel Herrera. Pancho López was also proclaimed a model worker. I understand that he ended up there after a bit of trouble in the G-2 [Security Police] or some other place. But Pancho was also there. They say that he is a good *compañero*. But he was there in the nucleus. He was one of the "seven privileged ones of the nucleus."

And who was Ezequiel Herrera? They say that Garrucho himself had proposed replacing him with one of his own cousins even though he was an old militant. That is what *compañero* Llanusa told me. I don't know if he will confirm it. We are not going to – everything that is said here, has good witnesses to support it, so there is no danger that we are going to invent anything here.

Then we went to Ambar Motors. Now Ambar Motors is a place which has a larger proportion of workers than the INDER. We were going to have a meeting. The nine-member nucleus had been formed there also. Well, what is the use of talking?

The nucleus consisted of nine members using the same system: the *compañero* director, the secretary of the director, the director's brother-in-law. Of course, I want to point out that the director's brother-in-law is a good *compañero* who is recognized as such by the workers there, but it comes to the same thing.

We went there to exchange a few opinions with the members of the nucleus and out came the head of personnel, in a work center like that one, which is filled with workers dressed in sweat shirts and overalls smeared with grease, a head of personnel wearing a "cute" shirt with loud colors and a pair of white pants. And he was a member of the nucleus! What the blazes! They were completely separated from the masses.

What happened? The following happened: they took out the old militants and made them part of the administration — head of personnel, director. Later, when they formed the nucleus — since they once again made use of the old militants — they made that Commission of Directors a part of the nucleus. The members of the nucleus were old militants and all were directors. There was no one from the masses in the nucleus. It was an administration nucleus.

These examples illustrate the errors we have committed. Well, what was happening as a result of these things? The Ministry of Industry rewards 60 to 100 workers every month; of the present 60, only five were members of revolutionary nuclei. The average runs from five to ten members of the revolutionary nuclei. Five to ten per cent out of every 100 workers. Is this not so, more or less? From five to ten out of every 100 prize-winning workers. We had fallen, then, into all those errors. Those are the things which we, all of us, the old as well as the new, joined together in a common purpose, must rectify.

We said, "Well, we have to rectify that situation. That is not the proper way to maintain contact with the masses." Why then, despite this situation, were we able to mobilize so many people so often? We were deceiving ourselves. It was not through that shell of an organization that we were able to accomplish that. It was through the means at the disposal of the revolution for mobilizing the masses: through the radio, television, the press — through all of those means. When we discussed all those matters with *compañero* Cesar, he expressed the opinion that there existed through those media a tremendous power for the mobilization of the people, a direct means for the mobilization of the masses. That shell of a party did not mobilize the masses.

We would be in some fix if we had to depend on that mere shell of a party during an enemy attack. It was a mere shell of a party. There were very good *compañeros* in it. I am not going to go into — later on I am going to speak about the old communists, about all those things; of how we have to view this objectively, calmly, honestly, fairly, justly.

But of course, that was not an apparatus for the mobilization of the masses. There really existed a great power for mobilization through the Commission of Revolutionary Orientation, a great power existed basically, through those means which the revolution has for mobilizing the masses. But no proper means for maintaining contact with the masses existed and that responsibility belonged to a vanguard workers' party.

Then we simply have to integrate the masses. We had organized a few ORI, Integrated Revolutionary Organizations, and the masses, who are revolutionary masses, and who are the ones who make history, were not integrated, because there were no members who were from the masses, no one, no one from the masses. That is how the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations were formed.

I am sure that any communist, any citizen, old or new, anyone who thinks, agrees that this is an error. Not what we are doing today. Today we are not arguing about communism and anti-communism, nor about what ideological road to take. The revolution is irrevocably defined as Marxist-Lenin-

ist and we are making this self-criticism of our errors within the framework of Marxism-Leninism. Let no one suffer from any fantasies or engage in any illusions on this score. Do not imagine that we are going to take a single step backwards. No, on the contrary, we are going to move forward! [Ovation]

I was going to say just at the moment that you interrupted me that we are going to advance greatly. We are going to take long strides forward and we are going to do so precisely by rectifying our errors.

We are discussing here — we are engaged in self-criticism as Marxists, *compañeros*, as Marxists-Leninists. Let the enemy say what he likes; it is not to the enemy's advantage that we hold this discussion; it is not to the enemy's advantage that we make this correction. This correction is only salutary and it will benefit the revolution.

That is, that we had made all these errors. We have to be a workers' vanguard party. We have to govern in the name of the working class, and we are making the aims of the revolution come true, and we are governing this country in the name of the working class, of the laboring class.

Our party has to be organized using Marxist methods, not by the methods of Louis XIV. Again I repeat a little expression which I have used at some meetings. These are the methods of Louis XIV: "Presto, I am the party. Presto, I begin to name the members of the party."

No, that is not democratic centralism nor anything like it. Democratic centralism is a very different thing. It is a leadership which organizes a party using Marxist-Leninist methods of selection, of work. What does it look for? It tries to gather within that party the best of the people, the best of the working class. The best workers in the country should be members of that party. Who are they? They are the model workers, the model laborers, who are in abundant supply.

In other words, the first requirement for belonging to the nucleus is to be a model worker. One cannot be a builder of socialism, nor a builder of communism, if one is not an outstanding worker. No vagrant, no idler, has any right to be a member of a revolutionary nucleus.

Very well now, that is not enough. Our experience during the course of this meeting has provided us with many interesting examples. He has to be an exemplary worker, but in addition he must accept the socialist revolution; he must accept the ideology of the revolution; he must want, of course, to belong to that revolutionary nucleus; he must accept the responsibilities which go with membership in the revolutionary nucleus. But, in addition, it is necessary to have led a clean life, that is to say, that one must never have served the tyranny as a soldier, as a policeman. Of course, there were people who had been members of the army who had been imprisoned for a long time; these cases are different.

There are special cases, of course, which are not like that of Garrucho. Garrucho was a councilman up to the very end, and I believe that he is a hero because only a hero could pretend to be a Batistiano for so long. If he was not really one, he deserves a medal.

But, well, what I want to say is the following: to have led a clean life; not to have any record as a *Mujalista* [supporter of Eusebio Mujal, head of the union confederation under Prio Socarrás and Batista], as a Batistiano; not to have been active in the PAU, in the PUR; not to have belonged to the armed forces of the tyranny, to the SIM [Servicio de Inteligencia Militar — Batista's secret political police] or to any of those groups. That worker's life must be free from that type of stigma.

This is interesting because recently, in a meeting, in — I believe that it was the Aspuru hardware store — in that meeting the workers were choos-

ing the model workers, because the masses are preceptive, they have a sense of justice which in every meeting at which we have been present, and in all other meetings, manifests itself in the choosing of some old militant from among the masses, because he stands out as a great communist, as an excellent worker.

The masses have a great sense of justice. Sometimes someone who has a bad record is chosen and the masses immediately bring this out. There have been cases where people who have bad records have been proclaimed as model workers. In some cases they have unfortunate records. Unfortunately such things happen. But in the meeting to which I am referring it so happened that the masses named an individual as a model worker. A worker got up from the multitude and said, "This man was a Mujalista." Then the man defended himself by saying that he had not been a Mujalista, and he confessed to having been a follower of Batista.

And in spite of this the masses said that he should belong to the nucleus. Such a mass of workers is confused and should be oriented. This means that it should be explained to them that such a man cannot belong to the nucleus for whoever says that he was a follower of Batista is saying that he agreed with all the crimes, with all the murders, all the tortures which Ventura, Carratalá and all those criminals committed. This has to be argued with the masses. That is the duty of the party organizers and they must say "No!"

Because, after all, the masses are not going to elect the nucleus; the Party is not an elected party. It is a "selection" which is organized through the principle of democratic centralism. Now, the opinion of the masses must be taken into consideration. It is of the utmost importance that those who belong to that revolutionary nucleus have the complete support of the masses, that they enjoy great prestige with the masses.

We have been witnesses to truly moving cases. We have arrived at a meeting and asked for a list of 15 *compañeros*. We have asked that the masses point out those whom they consider to be model workers. They have stood up there and proposed certain names. And there are many methods for inventing tricks, hoaxes, fixed meetings, but the methods used by a resourceful parliamentarian make all that impossible.

When we asked them, "Do you believe that there remains the name of someone here who, because of his merits, it would be a pity to leave off the list?" They proposed a worker, a young *compañero*, a Negro. I believe that his name was Juan Antonio Betancourt. They pointed him out.

That extremely modest worker got up. He is quiet, shy. He got up on a stool and they began to ask, "Why do you think, *compañeros*, that this man is a model worker?" And they began to explain, and a worker with the look of honesty about him said: "Look, I was a dissatisfied worker. I was unhappy with the revolution. I was transferred to this work center. *Compañero* Juan Antonio approached me, he spoke to me many times. He explained things to me over and over again. He did so much; he acted so well; he was such a good *compañero*; we saw this *compañero* work always with such determination; we saw him do so many things — this *compañero* came to work even when he was ill — that this *compañero* succeeded in convincing me, in persuading me. Today I am a worker who understands the revolution, a worker who supports and defends the revolution."

Another worker got up and said: "I would like to add to that. I was a worker who used to be absent quite often. I used to work on the outside because I earned more money. I used to earn two or three pesos more by working on the outside. Juan Antonio approached me; he spoke to me every

day; he explained to me that I was hurting the revolution; that mine was not an honest attitude; that I was harming the work center; that I was harming the working class; that I was harming my homeland. And then I was never absent again from my work center; I was never again an absentee worker."

Another one got up and said: "Juan Antonio suffers from a gum condition. He has such and such a problem and sometimes his face has been swollen for two weeks and he has never been absent from work."

Another worker stood up and said: "This *compañero* was once a painter. Later he began working in one of the offices. One day we arrived here with 15 cars which had to be painted. It was urgent that those cars be painted and this *compañero* said, 'Don't worry, just wait until I finish my work.' When he finished his office work he spent long hours until he had completed the painting of all the cars. And this *compañero* will just as readily work 15 or 20 hours."

While the masses were explaining those virtues, the qualities of that worker, one could not help but be impressed by all that was said, by all that recognition.

Then I asked a worker, "What do you think of this worker? Do you think that he is a better worker than you?"

And he said, "He's ten times better than I" – he was a young man.

"And do you hope to be like him? Do you think that you will be like him some day?"

And he said, "Perhaps I will. Perhaps if I improve myself, if I work, perhaps some day I will get to be as good a worker as he."

These are the men whom we have to recruit! If that worker has a clean record, if he was not a Batistiano, if he was not a Mujalista, if he does not have a bad record, we must win that man over to our side, we must send him to school, we must teach him Marxism-Leninism, for such men possess the most excellent, the most valuable raw material for the making of a builder of socialism, of a builder of communism.

How are we going to build socialism and communism which means work, which means the giving of oneself over completely to the work of society, without the men who are willing to work all the hours necessary, to make the necessary efforts, who go to work even when they are ill, who are never absent, without that type of worker of which the masses can give us many examples? That type of worker who is a militiaman, who is never absent when sugar cane has to be cut, who never misses guard duty, who is the kind of *compañero* who encourages others, who is recognized by the masses as a worker-hero, as a model citizen. We have to recruit such men as these. We must recruit all the revolutionists, old and new.

How could we keep the masses out? How could we divorce ourselves from the masses? There are many model workers among the old revolutionists who are recognized as such by the masses. There are others who are not model workers. There is no reason why there should be disagreement with this because being a communist does not endow one with a hereditary title 'nor with a title of nobility. To be a communist means that one has a certain attitude towards life and that attitude has to be the same from the first day until the moment of death. When that attitude is abandoned, even though one has been a communist, it ceases to be a communist attitude towards life, towards the revolution, towards one's class, towards the people. If this is so, let us then not convert that into a hereditary title!

We have fallen into that error. We have fallen into a problem of castes, not into one of classes, *compañeros*. Let us not give up the principle of class in order to fall into the problem of castes, into that of titles of nobil-

ity, into that of privileges, into that of sectarianism, *compañeros*. Every good Marxist, every good communist must understand this.

What spirit moves us to make these criticisms? Do we do this to bring about a change of opinion, to create an unfavorable opinion in regard to the old communist militants? No, *compañeros*, never. On the contrary, we do not want to expose so many good communists to the blame and to the scorn to which bad methods, methods which are not communist methods, to which a sectarianism which is neither Marxist nor Leninist, will expose them. Because such methods bring discredit and tend to spread. And they tend to make the masses regard all communists as they do that bad one, and not as they do the good ones, as they do so many Marxist militants.

We make this criticism, this self-criticism of criticisms, in which we are all to blame for the way in which these events have developed, simply to overcome these errors so that the revolution may free itself from these errors, so that we may proceed to the formation of a true vanguard party, a true Marxist-Leninist organization, which will march at the head of the working class.

Let us not confuse the functions of that organization with the administrative functions of the state apparatus. It so happened that we had established a principle of interference on all levels which was destroying the apparatus of the socialist state. And the socialist state has to function with great efficiency. How could we destroy that apparatus? How could we create such confusion? We must come out of that confusion.

What must our attitude be towards the old communists? It should be one of respect, one which recognizes their merits and which recognizes their militancy. That should be our attitude. What should his attitude be? His attitude should be one of modesty. What should be the attitude of a revolutionist, of one who fought? His should be an attitude of modesty. Of one who fought in the Sierra, in the underground? They should be modest, they should have revolutionary modesty. We must put an end to the boasting of those who say, "I did this, I did that during the insurrection."

We brought this out in the month of December and we must oppose all those who come around boasting about their deeds, no matter where they may be. Why? I dealt harshly with a *compañero* here and I said that he was hiding under the bed. Why do I judge this *compañero* so? Because I believe that a man who acts in that fashion cannot be a good revolutionist, he is instead a complete opportunist. Does this mean that we could consider anyone who did not fight to have been "under the bed"? No! Let us not be confused about this! I say that the opportunist, yes, that the opportunist, was under the bed. You cannot fail to call him otherwise, because a person who acts in that fashion is one who was hiding, full of ambition, corrupted.

That is not what we are saying here. We continue to insist that what one did not do in the past should not form the basis for the exclusion of anyone. This may serve as a reference of a sort; it may have some use. But, gentlemen, what is the revolution? The revolution is superior to what each of us may have done. It is superior and it is more important than each of the organizations that were here: the 26th [of July Movement], the Partido Socialista Popular, the Directorio – than all of them. The revolution by itself is much more important than all that.

What is the revolution? It is a great trunk which has its roots. Those roots, coming from different directions, were united in the trunk. The trunk begins to grow. The roots are important, but what begins to grow is the trunk of a great tree, of a very tall tree, whose roots came together and were joined in the trunk. All of us together made the trunk. The growing of the trunk is

all that remains for us to foster and together we will continue to make it grow.

The day will come, *compañeros* - think well upon this, because this is basic, think well upon this-when what we have done in the past will be less important, when what each of us has done on his own account will be less important than what we have done together. Let us take this idea with us. Within ten years, within 20 years, we will have the common history of having done this together, and then no one will be talking about what each one did on his own - in the Partido Socialista Popular, in the 26th, in the Directorio, in the other group. Then those things will be like the roots which come from afar, which now remain in the distance. The important thing is what we are already doing as a trunk, in which we are all united. And we have said this.

What have we done together? We have done many things together. Can the importance of the fight against imperialism be ignored? Can the fight against the enemy at Playa Giron, which was a crucible uniting all of us there, the day following the proclamation of the socialist revolution, all together, old and new communists, citizens who were neither old nor new to these things, people from the masses, anonymous heroes, can all this be ignored? Look at the photographs of those who died. More than 100 men who fell gave their lives for this. The greatness of the hour united them. Their sacrifice united them.

What matters is not what each of us has done separately, *compañeros*, the important thing is what we are going to do together, what we have been doing together for a long time now. And what we are doing together is of interest to all of us equally, *compañeros*. Who will be so stupid as not to care about what all of us are doing together, about how it benefits us or about how it hurts him? Who can be so idiotic as not to be able to understand these things? It is a tangible reality. We have to correct these things. What does this mean? Does it mean that the opportunist is going to sneak in now? No! Listen, *compañeros*, we have to dig a double line of trenches across the path of the opportunists, so that the opportunists may not sneak in. There is no opening here. Is the faker, is the sower of intrigues going to sneak in through some opening? There is no opening here. There must be a greater unity here between the old and the new!

Briefly, we must apply Marxist-Leninist principles to our work; we must follow a policy based on correct methods and a policy based on principles. A policy based on methods and on principles is the only correct policy which offers guarantees to all; all will feel secure with such a policy. That sectarian policy threatened to sweep all before it. No one felt secure any longer because of that sectarianism. Many *compañeros* saw evidences of sectarianism everywhere. No one felt secure. Why? Because it was a policy that was not based on principles; because it was a policy that was not based on correct methods. A policy based on principles, a policy based on correct methods offers guarantees and security to all revolutionists.

It is not a policy which is based on the acceptance of my or another's friends. It is not a policy based on personal friendships. It is not a policy based on unconditional followers. It is not a policy based on tamed or submissive people. No! A Marxist-Leninist party, which is the vanguard of the working class, is an association of free revolutionists, wherein all the revolutionists follow a policy based on methods and principles; a policy which offers equal guarantees to all, to whoever works, to whoever fulfills his responsibilities. A policy which offers guarantees to all against injustice, against abuse of power, against discrimination, against mistreatment, against

all these things, so that all may feel that they are equally guaranteed, the new as well as the old.

Does this mean that when we undertake the correction of these things that we are going to remove and to dismiss people left and right? No, *compañeros*, nothing like that. As many old militants may belong as long as the revolution considers it necessary for them to be there. But they must be placed there only as the result of the policy of the whole revolution, not because it is the policy of a political tendency, not because of a policy of a personal nature!

No, sir! No, sir! We must simply correct this in the manner in which it should be corrected, by benefiting from that correction; by emerging more united, stronger; by seeing who is good and who is no good and by allowing the quality, the quality of the work done to have the final word.

Now then, how must we act towards an old or new Marxist? We must be much tougher towards them than towards others. With whom must we be more exacting? With the member of the organization! How can we be less demanding with the member of the organization than with one who is not? No! No! The Marxist, the member of the organization, who makes a mistake is doubly to blame. One must be unyielding towards that error; one must demand that he assume his responsibilities so that the people may see that to be a member of the organization does not entitle one to privileges, to pleasures, to advantages, to the right to meddle, or to favors of any sort. No! Let everyone be aware that to belong to that organization may be a great honor, but that it also means sacrifice, more sacrifice, more work than others have to do, more self-sacrifice, than others have to make, that it means fewer privileges than others may have. That is what the organization must do so that the good ones, so that the best will belong to it, so that those who are no good will not belong to it, so that no demoralizing person, so that no opportunist will infiltrate it. How is the opportunist going to join such an organization! The opportunist goes where there are some advantages to be gained, where there is privilege. But when there is work to be done, where there is great effort to be made — there the opportunist will not go. The opportunist will go home.

This does not mean that they are to come in *en masse*. No! The organization has to be a selection of the very best in every respect. That is the kind of organization that we have to make. In regard to the old *compañeros* we should show respect, we should give them the best of treatment, we should have confidence in them. Do not forget that a sectarian individual may be a great *compañero* who has been infected with the virus of sectarianism, who may have been dragged along by a sectarian policy injected by persons in certain positions.

And I am going to cite an example. At the University a grave act of sectarianism, of dogmatism was committed when three lines of *compañero* Echeverría's political testament were suppressed. We protested bitterly. Who was responsible? Well, a good *compañero*. The *compañero* who had been responsible for that is without a doubt a good *compañero*. He is *compañero* Ravelo. And yet, why did he make that error? This demonstrates that it is the result of the influence of a line, of a personal line, of a line, of an injected policy, of a wrong attitude which has become quite widespread. That *compañero* is a good *compañero*. He called the whole University together, he subjected himself to a serious, honest self-criticism and he came out with more prestige at the University than possibly he had before he was criticized. Why! Because he had an honest attitude. The masses recognized that. And he is a good *compañero*.

The point is that a person who has committed an act of this kind is not a traitor to the revolution; he is not an enemy of the revolution. He was harming the revolution without knowing it. I am convinced that the great majority of cases were unconscious ones resulting from a policy injected by a *compañero* who had a determined policy and who is really responsible, who is very responsible for that policy because he was indulgent, he was complaisant, he practiced that policy which led to a very widespread sectarian attitude.

Then, what must our attitude be? Ours should not be a policy of reserve towards the old militant but rather one of confidence towards the old militant. And I am going to cite an example. In my bodyguard there are many old militants and I do not plan to remove any old militant from my bodyguard because I have full confidence in those *compañeros*. By this I want to show what an attitude of real confidence has to be, that is to say, that we should not now fall into the opposite form of sectarianism. We cannot fall into that! Because if we are going to rectify errors we cannot fall into other errors, and we have to be very alert, very vigilant and you may rest assured that we will fight any manifestation of sectarianism of any kind with all our energies! We will fight it with all our energies and by every means! Already we are going to fight through radio, through television, through the newspapers; we are going to accuse anyone who we think has committed an act of sectarianism, injustice, discrimination, reserve, distrust of any kind towards any *compañero*, no matter who may be responsible. That will be our attitude.

I believe that it is the only honest attitude, the attitude which we should follow, the one which will offer guarantees to all the *compañeros*, the one which will allow us to overcome these errors, the one which will allow the revolution to come out stronger, *compañeros*, to come out enhanced from this criticism.

It does not matter what our enemies may say. It does not matter that they may want to take advantage of this, tomorrow. That does not matter. They know that they are losing from this very moment in which we are beginning to correct serious errors, that the masses comprehend this, that they understand this, because the masses are just. They will be impotent before an organization, before a people, before a revolutionary government which is honest enough to analyze, to recognize the errors which have been made during the revolution, which has the courage to rectify them equitably, and calmly, with a spirit of justice.

We have been harsh today. We felt that it was necessary to be so, that it was healthy to be so. Because, *compañeros*, we feel that from this moment on, *compañeros*, all differences between the old and the new, between those who fought in the Sierra and those who were down in the lowlands, between those who took up arms and those who did not, between those who studied Marxism and those who did not study Marxism before, we feel that all differences between them should cease. That from this moment on we have to be one thing alone. And rather than be like that woman who they say kept looking — who the Bible says — kept looking towards that lake, towards that city which had sunk, and who was changed into a pillar of salt.

We cannot be changed into a pillar of salt, looking back at what we have done, contemplating, enjoying what we have done. We must look forward, *compañeros*! That is the only proper attitude for us to have, which all honest men should have, which all honest revolutionist, old and new, should have without reservations of any kind, without regrets of any kind, without mistrust of any kind. All of us, embracing our cause, our revolution, the hist-

oric mission of this revolution, embracing Marxism-Leninism, which is the ideology of the working class, which is a science. Embracing Marxism-Leninism which possesses all the attractions which a true revolutionary theory, a true revolutionary science, possesses. It is extremely rich and from it we can extract extraordinary lessons; in it we have an extraordinary instrument for struggle, an incomparable cause, the best cause for which to fight, the best cause for which to die, a cause which can be identified only with the spirit which is most profoundly human, most profoundly just, most profoundly generous, most profoundly good.

The enemy tries to present Marxism as something bad, as something unjust. No! Never allow them to confuse the masses by using the errors of those who act badly, of those who are wrong!

Our people today have the good fortune of being able to rely on a triumphant revolution with its power based on the masses. It has the good fortune of being able to rely on a revolutionary ideology, irresistible, invincible, a thousand times superior, infinitely superior, to the ideology of the reactionaries, of the exploiters; an ideology enriched by a century of struggles, enriched with the blood of workers, with proletarian blood, with the blood of heroes spilled in the defense of justice's cause, in defense of the cause of the equality of man, in defense of the brotherhood of man!

That is our cause. That is our standard! That is why we should feel proud, proud of being Marxist-Leninists, proud of being honest, proud, *compañeros*, of having the public spirit and the honesty to discuss here — publicly — our errors, to discuss them as we have discussed them, together, proud of solving them, as we have solved them, together; proud of appearing, as we are appearing here before the masses in order to explain to them, to explain to them in general terms, the basic measures taken — the dismissal of the *compañero* whom we consider responsible for these deeds, measures concerning the Directorate and the offices of the Secretary in Charge of Organization; the measures we have taken, the increase in the members of that National Directorate so that there may be included in it all the historic names, all the *compañeros* who, because of their merits, in one way or another, are worthy of belonging to that National Directorate!

If we do the same on all levels it will strengthen us, it will make our revolution more powerful. It will make the people's faith in the revolutionary leadership firmer. It will make the faith of all the revolutionists of the world in us greater. It will make the faith of all the revolutionary organizations of Latin America in the Cuban Revolution greater. Why? Because the fact that we know how to make corrections will give the Cuban Revolution prestige. It will give the Cuban Revolution all the strength which organizations have when they know how to purify themselves of evils, when they know how to correct their errors, when they know how to overcome their difficulties!

Rest assured, *compañeros*, that by doing this our revolution will be invincible. Rest assured, *compañeros*, that by doing this there will be no force in the world which will be able to defeat our revolution, and I repeat here what I said once when we arrived at the capital of the republic: "We have overcome our own obstacles. No enemies but ourselves, but our own errors, remain. Only our own errors will be able to destroy this revolution!" I repeat it today, but I add that there will be no error which we will not oppose and that therefore there will be no error which will be able to destroy the revolution! There will be no errors which will not be overcome, and that is why our revolution will be invincible.

— The End —